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JUL 3 1945

THE NEW
STATESMAN AND NATION
The Week-end Review

Vol. XXIX. No. 747. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1945 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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B. B. AND C.

SPEAKING at Chatham last Tuesday evening, Lord Beaverbrook told an astonished naval audience that Brendan Bracken was not only the greatest First Sea Lord of the Admiralty there has ever been, but also the best man for any job in a good government. So Bracken is Beaverbrook's nominee for the next Prime Minister! Before the formation of the Caretaker Government, the idea would have sounded fantastic. But election campaigns—especially when conducted by Express Lords—have a way of bringing into the open discussions which had previously been confined to the camarilla and the clique.

Such a suggestion will be dismissed by many as irresponsible lunacy. But it is already clear that Lord Beaverbrook is the real power behind the Caretaker's throne. Mr. Eden, conveniently out of the way with a duodenal ulcer, has never been able to achieve that jovial intimacy with Mr. Churchill which was accorded to the Beaver, Brendan and lesser buddies like Duncan Sandys. Sir John Anderson and R. A. Butler, representatives of traditional conservatism and burdened with departmental duties, were too ponderous to gain entry to the coterie which delight to settle the future of the party and the country over cigars and brandy into the early hours of the morning. The silent revolution inside the Tory Party was indeed completed many months ago when Mr. Churchill found relaxation from his arduous war responsibilities in the gay chatter of the coterie. At the time, it was a harmless diversion. So long as the war lasted, the Defence Committee was the real policy-maker on military and foreign affairs and the Labour Ministers and Sir John Anderson on the Home Front. But now Germany is defeated, the Service chiefs take second place and the Labour Ministers have left the Cabinet. Now at last the coterie has the opportunity to play politics instead of merely talking them.

Lord Beaverbrook, unlike more cautious king makers, delights in publicising his new position. Last Monday his *Daily Express*, as if to put Sir John Anderson in his place, announced categorically in the main story on its front page, that Income Tax will be cut by 2*s*. 6*d*. in the autumn. On Tuesday, it carried in the same position a statement by Lord Beaverbrook in person that the Empire Crusaders, headed by himself, launched the Government in 1931. The implication that they would launch the Government in 1945 was clear. And then on Tuesday, came the statement at Chatham on Brendan Bracken's qualifications for the highest office.

No wonder there is bewilderment and anger in the Carlton Club. The Prime Minister, whom the traditional Party leaders had hoped to employ as a facade to cheer up the gloomy structure of Tory policy, is being exploited by a clique of political adventurers who believe that they can win the election and the key positions in the Tory Party for themselves by borrowing from Dr. Goebbels the whole bag of propaganda tricks. Promise everybody everything, was Dr. Goebbels' recipe for achieving power in a democracy. They won't notice the contradictions during the election campaign; and when they wake up afterwards, it will be too late. The same contempt for the people inspires the propaganda of the B. B. and C. They force a snap election and then accuse Labour of desertion. They assume to themselves the monopoly of patriotism and national loyalty. Pledged to prosecute the war against Japan, they attack the Ministry of Labour's regulations without which the weapons of war cannot be produced. They promise simultaneously a steady price level to the consumer and the removal of price controls to the manufacturer; full social services to the workers and huge reductions of taxation to the employers; large scale trade with Russia and Empire Free Trade.

And this is only a beginning. The election has still more than a fortnight to run. There will be new stunts, new revelations, new feats of demagogy every day, reaching their climax in a superb combined operation: an appeal to the Right to vote National to save us from Socialism and an appeal to the Left to vote National for the sake of Lord Beaverbrook's good friend, Joseph Stalin.

The danger of such propaganda must not be underestimated. It is designed to confuse, to divide, and to substitute mass hysteria for sober reasoning. It is a dangerous argument to suggest that, though Dr. Goebbels could fool the poor Germans, Lord Beaverbrook has no chance of fooling us. He may well be able to fool millions of voters, because responsible Tories who should and could expose his demagogy, hope to benefit by it on July 5th, while keeping their own hands clean. That is an error into which responsible Conservatives in other countries have fallen. But it would be unwise to assume that Mr. Eden, Mr. Butler, and Sir John Anderson will take warning from the lessons of history—before July 5th.

The full responsibility, therefore, for defeating the campaign falls on the Labour Party. It alone is powerful enough to check the national hysteria which Lord Beaverbrook is seeking to excite; and to organise the defeat of the B. B. and C. at the polls. For this task it needs courage, coolness, and a determination to concentrate on the essential issues and not to be led into the byways of electoral controversy. So far we would reckon that it has more than held its own. The National currency has been devalued. But the people show no inflationary tendency to prefer the bad money which Lord Beaverbrook is so busily printing. So far, so good.

Hopes of a Polish Settlement

President Truman's shrewd and statesmanlike action in sending Mr. Davis to confer with Mr. Churchill in London, and Mr. Hopkins to talk things over with Stalin in Moscow, has had most encouraging results. At long last a conference on the Polish issue in clear conformity with the Yalta Agreement is to begin in Moscow. The Commission of three—Mr. Molotov, Sir A. Clerk Kerr and Mr. Harriman—is to consult with four leading members of the Provisional Polish Government, five democratic leaders from inside Poland and three from abroad. The leaders from inside Poland include Mr. Witos, the famous leader of the Peasant Party, Mr. Zuławski, the Secretary-General of the Polish Trade Unions, Professor Kutrzeba, professor of Law at Cracow University, with the reputation of an enlightened Nationalist, Professor Kryzanowski, one of Poland's leading economists and a man of conservative opinions, Mr. Kolodzeiski, for many years Librarian of the Polish Parliament, a prominent economist and a leader of the Polish Co-operative movement. From England Mr. Mikolajczyck is accompanied by Mr. Stanczyck, the miners' leader, who is much respected in this country as well as in Poland.

The announcement of these conversations seems to suggest that a much more accommodating spirit has been shown both in London and Moscow. It was always clear in the Yalta Agreement that the reorganised government was to be built round a nucleus of the present Warsaw administration. London is no longer suggesting names put forward by the London Poles and, for obvious reasons, unacceptable to Moscow and the Provisional Government. The present names are apparently regarded by all four governments as eligible for inclusion in the reorganised Cabinet. There are still many difficulties to overcome, but this is at least a beginning.

Rumour has it that some at least of the sixteen arrested Poles are to be released. This would be an act of statesmanship on Stalin's part, and it would involve a very considerable concession to Western opinion. The complaint against the U.S.S.R. was the method of arrest and the secrecy in which it was shrouded. The case against General Okulicki and also against Jankowski, the London Polish Government delegate for underground activities, is certainly very strong indeed. In all probability Moscow has also a formidable dossier against a number of the other arrested men. But a trial in the circumstances would have results that would be damaging to Russia's relations with the rest of the world. Not only would it be an occasion of immense anti-Soviet propaganda all over the world, but it would certainly involve the names of British agents in Poland and the publication of disruptive secret radio instructions transmitted from this country to the Polish underground movement. It can scarcely be the path of wisdom to wash so much dirty linen in public at a time when in all directions there seems a new hope of greatly improved relations between Russia and the Western world. On our side it is obvious that the British and American Governments must at once end the anti-Soviet activities of their agents in Eastern and Central Europe, and not only cease to recognise the London Poles but also refuse any longer to give huge sums of money to people who have used it throughout the war and are still using it to disrupt the United Nations.

A.M.G. at Work

This week has brought fresh evidence of the growing divergence between the attitudes of the occupying powers in Germany. First reports from the British and American correspondents in Berlin confirm the impression, expressed here last week, that the Russians, true to Stalin's declared policy, are operating a straight anti-Fascist policy. They are ruthless with the Nazi regime and all its supporters or collaborators; but they give the ordinary people a chance to rebuild their homes and their political life. This policy was re-emphasised by General Zhukov's announcement that genuine anti-Fascist political parties are now permitted to function under Russian military supervision. The Russians are not trying to govern Germany themselves. Their aim is obviously to revive German political and cultural life and to create as soon as possible an anti-Fascist German Government, based on the left-wing Catholics, the Socialists and the Communists, which will operate under Allied control. Meanwhile, the British and American authorities forbid every form of party political activity in their zone. This rebuff to German anti-Fascists is reinforced by the non-fraternisation order, whose validity Field-Marshal Montgomery has just reaffirmed. True, General Eisenhower has stated that in the American zone this does not apply to the kids. But the fact remains that in Western Germany it is the duty of the British and American occupying armies to refuse with equal emphasis to shake hands with a released inmate of Buchenwald and one of his former S.S. guards. Moreover, reports from Bavaria indicate that the authorities there, while forbidding the *Freiheitsaktion Bayern*—the widespread anti-Fascist movement which rose against the S.S. in Munich before the arrival of our troops—has installed an ultra-reactionary Bavarian administration in power.

Anti-anti-Fascism

Recent developments in Austria and Italy emphasise this growing cleavage between the Western and Eastern occupation policies. Austria is now rigidly separated into four zones; a small French zone on the Swiss border, an American zone round Innsbruck and Salzburg, a British zone in Carinthia and a Russian around Vienna. The Russians are encouraging the three-party Vienna Government to push on rapidly with legislative reforms, and to demonstrate the reality of Austrian independence. Care is being taken not to offend the Catholics and Cardinal Innitzer was permitted to celebrate Mass with full pomp on Corpus Christi Day. Meanwhile, the Austrian Communists have significantly announced their policy of nationalisation of all property owned by traitors and Germans. This would include practically all the industrial plants of Austria. The Austrian Communists' line, which is completely in accord with the policy of the new Czechoslovak Government, will in all probability soon become official Austrian policy. In the French zone, fraternisation is in full swing and the general policy is not dissimilar from that of the Russians. In the British and American zones, where the Vienna Government is not recognised, military government is resolutely determined to maintain non-fraternisation and to combat any anti-Fascist movement which challenges property rights. This policy, which stems from General Alexander's headquarters, is equally evident in Northern Italy. In a revealing despatch last Tuesday, a special correspondent of *The Times*, stated bluntly that A.M.G. has refused to recognise decisions of the local liberation committees which had successfully captured and taken over nearly all the industrial plants before the arrival of our armies. In the cause of "efficiency," managing directors such as Valletta, or Fiat, who collaborated actively with the Germans, are being reinstated, under the threat that the Allies will not release coal and other raw materials to factories run by workers' councils.

Ruhr Coal for the Winter

Whatever fate the United Nations are reserving for German industry as a whole, there can be no argument about the necessity of getting the Ruhr and Rhineland mines back into full production at the earliest possible moment. The Silesian coal, from the former German as well as from the former Polish mines, will presumably be all needed in Eastern Europe: and in the West we shall clearly have no surplus available for export during the coming winter. The Dutch, Belgian and French coalfields are all relatively small, and will need time before they can be got back into full working order. Without the Ruhr the coal problem in Europe is simply insoluble. Before the war the Rhineland and Ruhr produced more than half the total coal supply of the Continent. Although the Ruhr factories are masses of rubble, the mines themselves are not very much damaged; and the problem of getting them back into full working order is one mainly of labour supply and organisation. The Ruhr, though France is said to be claiming at least part of it, falls within the British zone of occupation: and the problem is ours to tackle.

A Settlement at Trieste

It is good news that the dispute with Marshal Tito has been settled by an agreement signed on Saturday at Belgrade. It places Venezia Giulia under the control of Marshal Alexander up to a line which bisects the Istrian Peninsula, leaving Pola and its West Coast under Allied occupation. From this region, which includes Caporetto and Gorizia as well as Trieste, the Yugoslav forces will withdraw, save for a token contingent of 2,000 men. The Allied Military Government will be entitled to organise the civil administration and Marshal Tito undertakes to return the civilians he deported. This settlement is, of course, provisional and prejudices the territorial claims of neither party. What it fully secures is the use of Trieste and the railway both for our military purposes and for the needs of Central Europe. The retention of Pola, once a great naval base, under British control, may have a strategical significance. The fragmentary news and rumours that trickle out of Carinthia are by contrast disturbing. It is said that the British military authorities took over the local Nazi police more or less intact, and that it has used its opportunity to repress both Austrian democrats and the Slovene minority. This accounts for the violence of Marshal Tito's polemics about this Austrian province, to which on ethnographic grounds Yugoslavia has no valid claim.

Our Dispute with France

The painful controversy with the French over Syria has been prolonged by a public exchange of charges and counter-charges between General Roget and Sir Edward Grigg. In this heated and suspicious atmosphere the generous speech in which M. Herriot reminded Frenchmen of their debt to Britain brought some hope that we may all recover our sense of proportion, before this quarrel hardens into a lasting estrangement. The actual issue is now what procedure shall be adopted to settle the dispute between the French, the Arab States and ourselves. General de Gaulle's proposal to refer it to a conference of the Big Five seems to us correct. Until the Security Council is actually in being, this is as satisfactory a substitute as could be found. It looks as if we were the first of the Great Powers to use our Veto to keep an awkward issue off the agenda—a thing we could not do, according to the text of the Charter, as it was fortunately amended at San Francisco last week. The British official objection to the French proposal, as Sir Edward Grigg stated it, is that Russia has no concern with a Middle Eastern question, because she is not at war with Japan. This is to take an absurdly narrow view of the issue. What is at stake is not merely the safety of our military communications, but the future of the Arab States and the status of France as a Mediterranean Power. In so far as Russia is disinterested, that is why she should be welcomed as one of the arbiters. The British counter-proposal of a tripartite conference means that the American State Department would arbitrate. This is not acceptable to the French, first because the U.S.A. is interested in the Arab oil-fields and secondly, because of the prolonged tension between Washington and de Gaulle. By a friendly concession on the composition of this conference we should do more than conciliate the French; we should pay our tribute to the principle of third-party judgment.

Canada Stays Liberal

The preliminary results of the Canadian General Election do not reveal any striking shift of opinion. In spite of the hurly-burly about the Liberal Government's conscription policy, Mr. Mackenzie King's party has secured just sufficient seats to remain in power as a majority government. In fact, the conscription issue has boomeranged on the Progressive-Conservatives.

French Canada—which elects a substantial proportion of Parliament—remained Liberal: Quebec citizens do not wish to be conscripted for the Far East war. And elsewhere, the Conservative agitation on the reinforcement issue has not helped them repeat their victory in the Ontario provincial elections. The C.C.F. made some gains, mainly in areas where it was known to be influential, but it has failed to make any big showing in the country as a whole. The soldiers' vote, however, seems to be swinging to the C.C.F. and when the final count is taken this may tip a few marginal constituencies in its favour.

" Meaningless Symbols "

Mr. Greenwood has replied effectively to Mr. Churchill's attack on him for saying that " pounds, shillings and pence have become quite meaningless symbols." The point Mr. Greenwood was making was, of course, that the wealth of a country depends not on its supply of currency, which depends on central banking policy, but on the use it makes of its real resources of man-power, materials, land, and capital goods. He was arguing, quite correctly, that we ought to think out our reconstruction policy in terms, not of money, but of these real resources and of the goods and services they can be used to supply. So far from pointing towards inflation, as Mr. Churchill suggested, his argument went the other way. Money-spinning, he said, could not make us one iota better off. To turn this into an indictment of the Labour Party as ready to play fast and loose with the national finances is the most unscrupulous misrepresentation. It is exactly on all fours with the attempt, made so successfully in 1931, to scare the electors into the belief that Labour had designs on their savings.

PARLIAMENT: On Edge

Wednesday afternoon.

THE terrific storm which blew up on Tuesday over the Government's decision to let Service candidates wear uniform at election meetings (and any Serviceman to take part in public meetings in plain clothes) was a symptom of the nervous tension now prevailing. Since the anti-Tories have hundreds of Service candidates, including both high officers and " other ranks," any advantage there may be in a uniform would not necessarily have gone to the Tories. However, it was clear that Labour Members shared Shinwell's suspicion that this was a mere electioneering dodge. In the absence of Mr. Speaker, who was helping to greet General Eisenhower, the unfortunate Mr. Deputy Speaker Williams had to ride this storm, which he did uneasily. On the following day the storm was allayed: the Prime Minister, all grace and good humour, announced a compromise based on the wishes of the House, and refused to be drawn by Attlee's neatly-pointed inquiry about the source of the bad advice which had led to the previous day's announcement.

There have been debates on Education and on Health which at another time could have been called useful but are now merely academic, except in so far as they provide election material by exposing the poverty of the Conservative approach to these two important matters. The resonant gloomy monotone of Dick Law (Caretaker of Education) was well adapted to his dilatory and inadequate story, which was, however, prefaced by a vague, rosy allegory about " great peaks " against the " blue " (True Blue ?) " of the summer sky." Creech Jones usefully denounced the " political claptrap " about education inserted by the Prime Minister in his " National " manifesto. He and Cove also quoted the *Times Educational Supplement's* indictment of a recent Ministry pamphlet. Mrs. Cazalet Keir (Assistant Caretaker) retorted with a quotation from the *Teacher's World*, praising it.

The outstanding contribution to the Health debate was the maiden speech of Sir John Boyd Orr, who should be a valuable Member of the next Parliament. He was " appalled " by the complacency shown about housing delays by people who had " forgotten the enormous productive powers of modern science." His estimate of the real possibilities was " a decent house, with at least a W.C. in it," for every family, in five years from now. Edith Summerskill engaged Willink in a prolonged skirmish on the " great betrayal " of the National Health scheme allegedly implied in his conversations with the B.M.A.

On Friday Grigg outlined, with good temper and clarity, the answers to the many questions which soldiers are constantly asking their M.P.s about home leave, repatriation, and length of service overseas. This *Hansard* should be circulated widely in the Army. The debate was tranquil and mutually complimentary except when Lady Astor was in the House. In the course of one of her incessant interruptions, she made the interesting disclosure, or claim, that the employment of the editorial staff of the *Observer* was within her control.

PONTIFEX MINOR

PLANNING FOR FREEDOM

AS was expected, Tory propaganda is seeking to represent the major issue of the election as a choice between Controls and Freedom. In reality, nothing could be farther from the truth. That there are forms of planning, such, for example, as were practised intensively by the Nazis, that are destructive of freedom, is too obvious to call for argument; but it is a mere trick first to identify totalitarian planning with *any* planning, and then to conclude that because Nazi planning co-existed with Nazi tyranny, therefore all planning involves tyranny and the subjection of the individual as a mere matter of course.

The Tory devotion to freedom at present finds expression mainly in two ways. These lovers of liberty attack Socialism as involving the enslavement of everybody to the State; and they attack all forms of State control, and particularly all that involve the use of statutory rules and orders, as infractions of the liberty of the subject and contrary to the principles and habits of British life.

Behind this smoke screen a great deal goes on that it by no means suits the Tory book to have brought to common knowledge. Workers enjoy the inestimable benefit of working for restrictive monopolists instead of for the public, and of being exploited as consumers by the very monopolists they serve. Consumers, supposedly in enjoyment under " private enterprise " of the widest possible range of choice in goods, have to go without a great many things, which could be within their reach if the prices were brought down by mass-production and if use instead of profit were the governing factor in production policy. Inventions, or even things that have not yet been invented, but might be, are patented in order, not to facilitate their production but to keep them off the market when they threaten existing vested interests. Landowners, in the name of freedom, are allowed to obstruct town improvement and to encourage ribbon development and the desecration of beauty, while keeping hikers out of country which they wish to preserve for sport. Owners of fishing rights are allowed to levy blackmail on the supply of water to the big cities. Firms are allowed to plant factories where they please, regardless of the claims of populations needing employment. Building financiers are allowed to obstruct the public building of houses at low rates of interest in order to win for themselves high interest in " private enterprise " houses, and thus advance rents to a level which the tenants most in need cannot afford to pay. State control of prices is denounced as bureaucracy and tyranny, while Trade Associations are allowed to rig the market to their hearts' content. All, of course, in the name of that freedom which is an Englishman's birthright.

There would be something in all this if the plans of the Labour Party really involved a rigid collectivism that would hand us all over to the tender mercies of the higher civil service. But how remote is such a picture from anything that can be expected to occur if the General Election puts a Labour Government into power! For what Labour actually proposes is the public ownership of a small number of industries which are already in the main under monopoly control; and even in these cases it is so set on avoiding bureaucracy that it is proposing a system of management by Public Corporation designed to give the largest possible elasticity in working, subject only to the overriding claims of the public interest. Moreover, so far from proposing to crush out the small manufacturer or trader, the Labour Party is setting out to make things easier for him both by facilitating the supply of cheap credit, and by laying rough hands on the monopolists in whose power he finds himself more and more placed by the working of the system farcically still called " private enterprise."

One freedom, no doubt, the Tory Party will safeguard much more fully than the Socialists—the freedom to remain unemployed, and even to draw a dole instead of having to work for a living. For the Tories, who maintained a pool of one million unemployed right up to June, 1940, are unlikely to reduce unemployment below that figure by removing the controls, through which our present full employment was achieved. They will therefore be under the necessity of paying out doles without asking too many questions about a man's willingness to work. They will, no doubt, try to pay as little as they dare—hence their determination to retain the Means Test in face of Sir William Beveridge's insistence on its abolition. But the " freedom " to live on doles is inseparable from a situation in which there is too little employment to go round.

Another freedom about which the Tories are making a song is freedom to choose one's own doctor; and this is to be safeguarded under Mr. Willink's latest plan, by removing from the State Health scheme the power to direct doctors into areas which are so undermanned that the patient has in practice hardly any choice at all, and by obstructing the development of the kind of Health Centre, based on salaried group practice, that would give the public the widest range of effective choice. Free choice of school is to be similarly promoted by encouraging grammar schools to transfer to the " direct grant " list, and thus remove themselves out of the control of the local authorities and secure the right to go on charging fees despite the majority recommendation of the Fleming Committee. The right to remain poor may also be safeguarded with equal care, by whittling down Family Allowances, by withdrawing effective protection from wage-rates under the Wage Councils Act, and by refusing to revise social insurance benefits to correspond with the increase in living costs since the Beveridge Report was drafted.

But, perhaps most religiously of all, the Tory anti-planners will defend the sacred right to be inefficient, as if freedom and inefficiency were one and the same thing. They will stand up for the rights of the coalowners, even if this means that there isn't any coal; of the cotton lords, as Cobbett used to call them, even if this means that British cotton goods are too dear to find any markets; of the steel ring, even if this puts up the price of cars and stands fatally in the way of an effective development of export trade. The right to be inefficient is, we concede, up to a point a valuable right; for the last ounce of efficiency can be bought too dearly in terms of the sweating monotony of highly mechanical production. But, even if we ought to stop short of the final ounce, need we stop short of the whole pound? We cannot afford to stop so far short, in view of our imperative need both to sell exports to pay for necessary imports and to depend more than in the past on our productive resources to improve the British people's standard of living.

"Once upon a time," perhaps, private enterprise did point the way to freedom—on the whole, though it involved not merely serfdom but slavery for many victims of the Industrial Revolution. "Once upon a time," some of these ills were worth suffering because on the whole the people, as consumers, scored heavily enough by the expansion of low-cost production to tip the balance in their favour. But can anyone in his senses maintain that this is true in Great Britain to-day, when "private enterprise" has ceased to be enterprising and "the career open to the talents" has no longer even a plausible appeal to the main body of the people? To say this is not to say that private enterprise is to be suppressed, where it really still exists. Far from it. It is a long time since we met a Socialist who wished to nationalise all industries, or wished to pursue the war against profit into regions where profit would still be reasonably held to have a legitimate social function. Not profit, as such, is the enemy, but the belief that under modern conditions the key industries can be galvanised into efficiency by the spur of profit, and that there is no other social incentive that is worth considering at all. Let us certainly take all reasonable precautions to prevent planning from degenerating into bureaucracy. But let us not omit to observe, at the same time, that there are other dangers which threaten our prosperity and our freedom a great deal more—the danger of restrictive monopoly in the hands of great financiers, linked with even greater financial wizards in the United States; the danger of that Toryism which obstructs changes seen to be necessary and even inevitable in the hope that the old order, though doomed, will somehow last its time.

These will be the real issues to be decided on July 5th. It can be assumed that they will be discreetly avoided by Tory candidates who will prefer to persuade us that a nation's gratitude to a great War Minister is best expressed by returning to power the Party which led us to the edge of defeat. All the more reason for Labour candidates to discuss them factually and objectively; and to ensure that the electorate realizes that the real choice is between public and private controls.

FRANCE AFTER THE ELECTIONS

[BY A CORRESPONDENT RECENTLY IN FRANCE]

GENERAL DE GAULLE has announced that some form of general election, either for a Constituent Assembly or for a new Chamber elected in accordance with the constitution of the Third Republic, will be held this year. Only a few months ago he had insisted that nothing of the kind could be done until next Spring. It is not unprofitable to speculate on the reasons that may have led him or his Government to change their minds.

In theory, it is the unexpectedly rapid return of prisoners and deportees that has brought forward the election date. A mid-October election would give the last of them three months to find their feet and study the records and programmes of the six political parties and sixteen resistance groups, plus other oddments, that made up the political kaleidoscope at the municipal elections. In fact, and although the Socialist Party has for some time been pressing for an autumn election, few politicians can be entirely happy about the prospects of the prisoners' vote. These men, who have dominated so much of French political thinking since 1940, have returned to a homeland almost wholly unprepared to receive them, unable to feed or clothe them and which next winter will still be unable to keep them warm. The sight of the striped pyjamas of Buchenwald and Dachau in the streets of Paris is an unpleasant reminder of the poverty of France, which the belated requisitioning of clothes-stocks can neither remedy nor hide. The still empty food shops and still too often unhonoured ration coupons tell the same story. The prisoners and deportees who worked on the land in Germany, and even some of those from the towns, are returning to a diet markedly inferior to what they had in Germany. No wonder they are angry and no wonder so many people are anxiously asking themselves how they will vote.

At least one category of former prisoners has another and more serious ground for complaint. The political deportees, whose number has been placed as high as 600,000, have paid a high price for their convictions and have come to expect high moral standards in others. They find a country which is still one vast black market, inadequately administered by a Civil Service machine which is inefficient, partly because too many Vichyites have been left in office and partly because too many have been cleared out. Léon Blum spoke for all of them when he talked sadly of the purity he had expected and the corruption he had found.

Whether they can do anything about it is a different matter. General de Gaulle's government has been disappointingly weak and slow, despite the many honest and able men it contains, but it must in fairness be said that the task of bringing order out of the total chaos of last autumn and plenty out of the transport-coal-food vicious circle would probably have defeated the best government imaginable.

Perhaps it is the realisation of this fact that keeps Léon Blum and Herriot out of office. Both have returned with their prestige high. When Blum arrived unannounced at the offices of the *Populaire*, the passers-by on the boulevard recognised him and stood by silently with bared heads while he entered—and this is by no means an isolated incident. Blum is already giving the Socialist Party the leadership it so badly needed, but neither he nor Herriot is prepared as yet to enter the Government. Nevertheless, their presence alone brings a new and vitally important element into a difficult situation. General de Gaulle was being increasingly criticised by almost all politicians, but had lost none of his popularity (always seriously underestimated in this country) with the French people. He showed a Churchillian contempt for economics and talked about Indo-China and the Rhine to starving and shivering villagers, but the people blamed the politicians rather than him and the politicians all knew that any other leader would only add acute political division to all the existing difficulties. A combination of Blum and Herriot (with perhaps Reynaud) does provide a possible alternative leadership—which perhaps explains why de Gaulle has at last made a full speech on economic questions and outlined a real economic programme.

The municipal elections, which were expected to bring some clarity into the political situation, have failed to do so. When their date was fixed last autumn, first for February and then for April, it seemed probable that the Socialists, who had at least the advantage of possessing a political programme, would emerge as the leading party. But the winter weakened their position, and they faced the electors the prisoners of two separate *mystiques*. On the one hand, the *mystique* of national unity kept their Ministers in four of the key positions in a Government which either moved slowly away from or only reluctantly accepted their party programme. On the other, the *mystique* of working-class unity, together with a genuine determination not to become part of an anti-communist *bloc*, prevented them from exposing the combination of chauvinism and demagogy that now constitute the Communist Party line. When the formation of a Socialist-Communist *comité d'entente* was proposed last November, the Communists jumped at the offer. Inside the Committee, though they jibbed at first at nationalisation, the Communists in the end accepted even that and on everything else merely called for a dotted line on which to sign. This made the Socialists cautious but did nothing to reduce their difficulties.

Worse still, the Socialists allowed themselves to be outmanœuvred on election tactics. When the Communists first proposed joint lists of all resistance candidates (with the candidates themselves selected by popular acclamation in the market square!) the Socialists quite rightly refused. They wanted a show-down, a genuine party fight that would reveal where everyone stood. By persisting in this refusal when the Communist joint-list proposal had been accepted by other big resistance groups, they put themselves at a disadvantage, at any rate in the short run. The Communists got the votes both of their allies and of the many of the bewildered new electors who sought safety in voting for the biggest groupings. For the second ballot, indeed, the Socialists changed their tactics.

If one adds to all this the fact that, outside Paris, the electoral system used was the least representative ever devised by the ingenuity of man, it becomes clear that the lessons to be learned from the election are very few indeed. The Communists and their various temporary allies hold the Paris region, Limoges and one or two other big towns, and a thousand odd smaller communes. The Socialists hold Marseilles, Lille, Douai, Toulouse, Roubaix, Tours, Montluçon, Nantes, Bordeaux, Nice, Grenoble, Cherbourg, Clermont-Ferrand and something over 4,000 smaller places. The Radicals still control over 6,000 communes. including 55 of over 4,000 inhabitants, and the various right-wing parties hold 15,000 communes (mostly small ones) between them. What all this may mean in terms of national politics, nobody knows. But the Communists claim to be the victors in the municipal elections and are demanding more representation in the Government. The whole situation is explosive and needs clarifying as soon as possible.

There remains the Levant issue. It is worth noting that de Gaulle's declaration about the election was made in the course of a press conference about the Levant, and that fact alone inevitably makes one wonder how far the two things are linked in the General's mind. It has been suggested that he is attracted by the idea of rallying French reaction by a violent campaign against "perfidious Albion." On the other hand, the strongest of his Left-wing critics insist that he is not a reactionary, and that in any case no such campaign could succeed in the present Anglophile temper of French opinion. This is probably true, but it does not mean that the Levant affair may not yet play a big role in the election. French press comment, which at first was more restrained than British, is stiffening behind de Gaulle. The Communists, who were at first hesitant, now give him whole-hearted support. All parties and all papers accept the French version of events—that the Syrians started the recent fighting and that British policy gave them at least tacit encouragement. Even the many people who in private are critical of the French record in Syria, of the attitude of French officials there and of the methods of recent French action, are none the less convinced, along with everybody else, that France must maintain her "special" position there. If British policy is allowed to drift, as it is drifting at the moment, towards a situation in which we take the place of the French in Syria, we shall have done irreparable harm to Anglo-French relations and may push de Gaulle, with his prestige policy, into the arms of the reactionaries. The road is open to a tremendous victory of the Left in France. Let us make sure that we do nothing to make that road more difficult.

A LONDON DIARY

General Eisenhower is one of the few great men who have emerged in this war. His speech on Tuesday was worthy of him. He is shrewd, humane and wide-minded enough to manage men of many different types and nations. His job has been to act as Chairman and co-ordinator of a most difficult team engaged on the most complicated operations. He has moral courage. One of the memorable stories of the war is of his final decision about D-day. The Generals, Air-Marshals and Admirals sat round and gave their views, their estimates of the technical problems, their doubts about the weather and so forth. When they had finished Eisenhower said, "I am Supreme Commander and I must make this decision myself. Will you all leave the room?" A quarter of an hour afterwards he called them back and said, "We sail to-morrow." There was to be no Dardanelles muddle about responsibility; it fell on his shoulders alone.

* * *

Dr. Jagodzinski, editor of *Polpress*, was a "deserter" from the Polish army in the sense that he had decided (as the Yalta Conference did) that Lublin was the Provisional Government of Poland and that he would not take orders from the London Poles. This was long ago; in the interim he was fetched from his academic life to edit the organ of the Lublin Poles in London. On Friday British police arrested him at his office and passed him over to the Poles; he refused to recognise the authority of a London Polish court-martial and was taken off to prison in Scotland. This prison has wrongly been called a "concentration camp"; it is a "glass-house" of which ugly things have been told. A man was shot there "attempting to escape" and ex-prisoners have described punishments such as hanging up by the arms which they say have been practised there. But it is not, in the current sense of the word, a concentration camp. Dr. Jagodzinski was almost at once released. For three reasons. The press gave wide publicity to his arrest. The more sensible London Poles saw that the sooner he was out the better and the Home Office immediately demanded his release. This was wise. If, as I hope, we very soon have a new Warsaw government it is possible that Dr. Jagodzinski (who is a moderate, independent sort of fellow) may become an official of the new government in which case, under the present law, he might be in a position to order the arrest of the London Poles who arrested him.

* * *

During the Spanish Civil War, Franco ran a propaganda agency in this country called "Spanish Press Services." I see that it has started up again and is publishing a broadsheet under the title of its old monthly *Spain*. There appear to be plenty of copies available. I understand that one has been sent to all former contacts of this agency, and supporters of Franco in Britain. This isn't the only sign of a campaign to get Franco Spain admitted to the United Nations organisation. Franco's friends are alarmed; it now looks as though the exiled Republicans may reach that agreement among themselves which is so necessary if Spanish Fascism is to be overthrown. Prieto, the Socialist leader, who is secretary of the Spanish Committee of Liberation in Mexico, has recently put forward a programme for getting rid of Franco without another civil war. He has asked the United Nations to break off diplomatic relations with the Franco regime and issue a public denunciation of its record. He wants the exiled members of the Spanish Parliament to meet and to elect a provisional government which will then seek recognition from the United Nations. This would mean, I suppose, that Dr. Negrin, who is the constitutional Premier, would first have to place his resignation in the hands of Martinez Barrio, the last Speaker of the *Cortes* who is with Prieto in Mexico. Six months ago, internal differences would have made this almost impossible. Now, all the main Republican groups seem to be nearing agreement. One striking fact is that Negrin and Prieto both emphasise the need for an amnesty in Spain when Franco falls.

* * *

The Treasury replaces the Board of Education as wet-nurse to C.E.M.A., and the buxom bantling has been given the more respectable name of "Arts Council." The chairman, Lord Keynes, celebrated the occasion with a most persuasive speech, and answered questions about future plans. Of the many good points he made, three are perhaps specially important; the shameful shortage in the provinces of buildings in which plays, concerts and exhibitions can be given; the intention of the Council to help local authorities with money and advice rather than themselves to build and administer; and the advantage of encouraging the Arts through autonomous bodies, under some supervision from the State which subsidises them, instead of submitting the Arts to direct control by a Ministry. This peculiarly English method, as Lord Keynes called it, has immense possibilities. Private enterprise has not even attempted to bring the vast majority into contact with the civilising arts. On the other hand the Civil Service is traditionally, perhaps inevitably, too inelastic to handle happily the Muses—for these wilt at any hint of regimentation. The war record of C.E.M.A. has been resplendent, and the Arts Council promises to make peace far more widely and finely enjoyable.

* * *

University seats may suffer even worse than others from lack of time to make the register full and up to date. The reason is that the younger graduates are spread all over the country and often, indeed, abroad, without having sent their present addresses to the registry. It will be the Progressive candidates who will suffer. To some extent this will be true of all the Universities, including London, where I very much hope for the return of Mary Stocks, who in every way would make a first-class M.P. Oxford and Cambridge may fare worst because, while the younger progressive graduates are scattered, the country parsons, older schoolmasters, dons and other professional people, have not often changed their addresses during the war. This more Conservative body of voters will get their ballot papers safely enough. As things stand, I believe thousands of younger University voters, who would support candidates like Priestley, Cole and Mary Stocks, will have their papers wrongly addressed. I hope all such graduates who see this paragraph will immediately write to their Registrar to inform him where he should communicate with them.

* * *

Sometimes, in the middle of the war, you might be introduced to pseudonymous individuals who turned out to be surprisingly well-informed about conditions inside Europe. Later, when you asked about them, you'd be told they were "out of town" and realise they had gone back to France or Belgium or some other unknown address. I often wondered what became of these visitors and if we'd hear about them again. I remember how, in 1941, there was a sudden change in the attitude of some of the French Socialists here towards de Gaulle. Then I heard they'd been talking to a "Monsieur Garnier" who turned up in London from time to time. He'd come here to argue that French Left and Trade Union opinion was behind the General and that his leadership must be accepted. He saw de Gaulle, too, and persuaded him that resistant France was a Left France. Now, it appears, "Monsieur Garnier" was Christian Pineau, formerly Secretary of the Economic Council of the C.G.T., who has just become French Minister of Food. He was caught by Vichy customs officers in 1942 as he was leaving to catch a submarine to England. He made a dramatic escape a few months later. Being moved from one prison to another, he found he was in the same train as Vivier-Merle, a well-known trade-unionist of the Rhone department and one of the bravest resistance leaders, who was later killed in an American air raid on Lyons. Vivier-Merle helped him to jump the train and get away. Pineau was in England again in 1943 and, on his return, was captured by the Nazis. But they failed to recognise him and, instead of shooting him, sent him to Buchenwald. Less than a month after his release he is back at work in a key job. And I am sure that his won't be the only story of this sort.

* * *

If you look at the Radio programmes in the *Daily Express* for the first three days of last week you will find these entries:

Monday: 9 p.m. News. 9.15. The Prime Minister.
Tuesday: 9 p.m. News: The Raid on St. Nazaire. 9.30 Tuesday Serenade.
Wednesday: 9 p.m. News. 9.15. Election Speech: Lord Samuel.

When this was pointed out to me I assumed that the omission of Mr. Attlee's broadcast was a printer's error. Now I find that another edition of the *Express* for Tuesday, with a different lay-out, also makes the same curious and suggestive omission. Coincidence? Perhaps. But it can scarcely be coincidence that captioned a report of Attlee's broadcast: The National Socialists.

* * *

A malignant sprite seems to be working against the Opposition in this election. A. J. Cummings is ill; David Low's absence for a fortnight on grounds of ill-health takes away another bonnie fighter.

* * *

I can vouch for the truth of the following incidents on a single-track bus journey last Saturday. They seem almost to amount to proof that we are becoming a nation of high-brows. A friend boarded a 38 bus at Green Park, asked the conductor whether he went past Sadler's Wells. "Yes, I should say I do," he replied. "I wish I could go inside instead . . . That will be threepence for Peter Grimes." All the way to Roseberry Avenue, a young man sitting next my friend whistled the Tarantella from Walton's *Facade*; it is not an easy tune to whistle and the whistler did *not* get off at Sadler's Wells. But my friend did, and as he left the bus he heard the conductor shouting at the top of a loud voice: "Sadler's Wells! Any more for Peter Grimes, the sadistic fisherman!"

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Nicolas Bentley.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

In these democratic days when men rise from the humblest origins to the highest positions in the land, our old families are passing through a testing time.—*The Queen.*

The fact is that production of goods is not the main source of Britain's wealth, and the working man has little to do with the creation of our real earnings.—From a letter in *Daily Telegraph.*

Mr. Harold Kingham, dustman, of Tebworth, near Luton, has decided to continue with his work because people who had sworn at him have now apologised, it was reported to Luton rural council yesterday.

Mr. Kingham had asked to be released from his job because he was "sick" of people swearing at him.—*Daily Mail.*

Conservative Agent for Balham and Tooting Association, preferably certified, but applicants with proved organising ability considered; salary £450–£550.—Advt. in *The Times.*

BRITISH INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE—II.

The possibility of the scientific revolution in British industry in the immediate post-war years depends mainly on political and economic factors. The legacies from the past in the form of backwardness and distrust of science will have to be swept away and the more modern tendencies to restrictive monopoly broken, before the stage can be set for the transformation. But the present prospects for the world make this a perfectly possible as well as a necessary condition. We are entering an era which will put demands on productive capacity absolutely greater than any which have existed before and relatively greater to our means than they have been since the first days of the industrial revolution. Not only is there the damage in Europe to repair, but this has to be done, in the first stages, without the resources of European industry. While this may be a short term task, behind it lie the far greater and persistent demands of the hitherto backward parts of the world in Asia, Africa and South America. Here the war has already definitely marked a transition from agricultural communities producing food for subsistence and, to a lesser degree, economic raw materials for export, towards modern industrial communities capable of trading with the older countries on an equal basis. To effect this change, they need not only imports of machinery but imports of technical skill and scientific knowledge. Thus the opportunity and the demand for rapid transformation exist together and the forces that are trying to hold back progress will be fighting a losing battle.

Nevertheless the part that Britain will play in this reconstruction of the world will depend on how realistically we face the needs of the situation and are determined in dealing with the obstructive forces. The test will be whether Britain can produce goods and services whose quality and price can compare on the open market with those of other industrial countries. It is already generally recognised that this cannot be done without a very considerable refitting of industry in the form of capital goods—new and more efficient machinery and plant. What is not so clearly realised is that both the equipping and the running of the new industries will require the services of a much larger number of skilled technicians and scientists than we can find in the country to-day or are likely to train unless we make radical changes in our educational system and the organisation of scientific research.

If we cannot greatly increase the number of qualified scientific and technical persons of all grades, from assistants and draughtsmen to directors of research, it is no use expecting any of the benefits that improved methods of production can bring. Already the number of scientific and technical personnel in this country is entirely inadequate to the limited needs of present day industry. This shortage was foreseen many years ago, but became obvious during the war when we were seriously hampered by the lack of scientific personnel and had to devise emergency methods, such as the Bursary system, to build up and train them.

The core of the present difficulty is that we are still clinging to a nineteenth-century view of the functions of higher education, namely, the production of a very restricted class of professional men—administrators, doctors, lawyers, etc.—and consequently only give university education to one and a half per cent of our young men and women as against ten per cent. in the U.S.A. and six per cent. in the Soviet Union. We had, in fact, before the war, the lowest percentage of university educated people of any country in Western Europe. The universities themselves, concerned more with the difficulties of teaching what students they have than with any general care for national welfare, are firmly opposing any substantial increase in students. Nevertheless, if the demand is to be met, new universities will have to be created and many more scientific teachers found. In normal times, where leisurely progress could be expected, this increase would come of itself, as it did in the nineteenth century, from the pressure put by the users—in that case the manufacturers—for suitably trained staff; but we cannot aford to wait for these methods. Unless the Government takes the question of the scientific and technical manpower of this country in hand as a matter of national policy, it is idle to hope for a rate of technical change that will close the gap between ourselves and more advanced countries. What has been done up to now may maintain the present number of students but can hardly increase them. The Universities Grants Committee has, it is true, raised the grants from £2½ millions to £5½ millions per annum. This, however, in effect only raised the total income of the Universities from £6½ millions to £9½ millions, which will only just make up for the increased cost of living, and this sum has to suffice for all teaching needs of which the scientific and technical amount to only one-third.

Scientific research itself is also carried on in this country on a dangerously small scale. All responsible bodies who have investigated the question—the British Association, the Association of Scientific Workers, even the Federation of British Industries—agree on this point. While it is difficult to be precise, it is probable that we spend one-tenth of one per cent. of our national income, or some £8 millions a year, on industrial and fundamental research in this country. We could spend many times this amount profitably; but, on account of practical limitations due to lack of trained manpower, a figure such as that given by the Association of Scientific Workers of a three-fold increase, that is, £24 millions, seems a reasonable target for the immediate future.

Expenditure of money on research is no guarantee of success, but not spending it is a certain guarantee of failure: modern science simply cannot be done on the cheap. To get the best results from science in industry requires more than the work of a few brilliant men or even the work of a few first-class research institutions. It requires coherent planning of the whole field of industrial effort. Under our present economic system only State action can provide such co-ordination between the needs of different industries and of the ultimate consumer. Actually, we have for many years now implicitly considered industrial scientific research as a national concern, in the first place by the setting up of the Department for Scientific and Industrial Research and, more recently, by the proposal to exempt research expenditure of firms from income tax. This is, of course, an indirect subsidy; and it is one that should carry with it in the interests of the public, a guarantee that the research that is carried out is as much for public as for private benefit.

It is admittedly difficult to find a means by which the State can carry out its function of protecting the public without positive interference in the productive activities of industry. At present, State-financed research in industry is largely concerned with standardisation and the study of technical failures. It is not concerned with research tending to the development of new methods, and this is precisely the research that is most needed. It may be that the establishment in Government laboratories of a specification standard of performance of machinery and products over the whole range of industry, will be sufficient stimulus to private concerns to produce goods up to this standard. The stimulus would be reinforced by the increasing degree to which national and local government purchases influence industry. It is also essential that the costs of production should be kept down and that the efficient firms should no longer take shelter behind the inefficient ones. The government, as purchaser and guardian of public interests, must have means of knowing what the real costs are and of criticising prices, not only if the profit margin is too high, but, even more because of the use of inefficient or antiquated processes.

To carry out these functions implies a great increase in the range of government-organised science. It also implies a much greater degree of co-ordination. The only way of achieving this, particularly in view of the shortage of scientific manpower, is by creating some kind of general staff for government science. Already we have, under the Lord President of the Council, what is in effect a Ministry of Science, and this organisation is capable of development to meet the new needs if it can enlist the services of the independent scientists of the country as effectively as they were enlisted for the war. Much was learned in scientific organisation through the experience of the war, particularly the importance of the strategy of scientific research, that is, of the distribution of limited scientific manpower to where it was most needed and of using it in a co-ordinated way. We need this lesson most of all at the present moment where there is a serious danger that, control over employment being relaxed, rational priorities will disappear: firms will bid against each other and against the government for scientific workers and research will tend to drift off to directions where the easiest money can be obtained, into such relatively unimportant industries as, for instance, radio and cosmetics.

It is not going to be easy to get an adequate scale of organised scientific effort in Britain. Apart from general apathy and stupidity, it is effectively opposed by monopoly interests who naturally prefer to keep in their own hands such research as they think worth doing. Besides the external opposition, there is, as in the analogous case of medicine though to a lesser degree, opposition from inside the scientific world itself. The Victorian tradition of "pure science" dies hard. Now this was a very good tradition in its time when it was essential that science should not sell itself body and soul to the vigorous but greedy and shortsighted capitalist of the mid-nineteenth century. The situation to-day is quite different; science is as little able as industry to function on an individualist basis. It is equally important that the discovery of new truth should not be bureaucratically ordered. But this does not represent an insoluble contradiction. It is perfectly possible, as has been shown for many years in the Soviet Union, and in Britain and the United States during the war, for scientists themselves to organise so as to be able to carry out general directives while actually assisting groups and individuals to develop their ideas freely to an extent that they were never able to do in the pinched days before the war.

As long as the organisation is under the direction of scientists, an adequate allowance for the pursuit of fundamental research will be made. This must be done for two reasons: the first is that it is only on the boundaries of knowledge, and particularly at the meeting of theory with experiment and observation, that important new advances will be made. The second is that it is only in fundamental science that the principles common to all application can be found. The younger generation of scientists, already a large majority in numbers, if not as yet in fame, fully realise these considerations and they are, particularly through the Association of Scientific Workers, pressing vigorously for a planned science which combines the idea of national service with real scope for scientific effort. It is, however, time to realise that this struggle is not one for scientists alone. The future of Britain as an industrial nation, and with that the future of the tradition and culture which she represents, depends on whether we can, before it is too late, use our talents and organising capacity to compensate for the damage that has been done by years of stupidity and neglect.

J. D. Bernal

PETER GRIMES—II

After hearing several performances of *Peter Grimes* one can scarcely avoid seeing in Benjamin Britten a fresh hope, not only for English, but for European opera. Constantly, during this past week, audiences at Sadler's Wells have been saying to themselves: "At last! After so many amateurs, a professional composer of operas!" If they are right, it is none too soon. With the death of Puccini and the long *decrescendo* of Strauss, the species looked like becoming extinct. *Turandot*, says the encyclopædic Loewenberg, was "the last world success in the history of opera"; and that was nearly twenty years ago. Even were it another *Turandot*, there would be much to prevent *Peter Grimes* from enjoying now the international success which it might have had in the Twenties: not least, the fact that the old world of "international" opera does not, at the moment, effectively exist. But of one thing I am convinced: if the world returns to sanity, and if Britten chooses to remain in the theatre, he has it in him to write an all-conquering work of the order of, say, *Der Rosenkavalier.* As for ourselves, *Grimes* should acquire for us something of the significance which *A Life for the Czar* has for the Russians or *The Bartered Bride* for the Czechs: it should lay at last the foundation-stone of a national school of opera. Its vigour, audacity and mastery of dramatic movement place it in a different category from the tentative affairs which we have hitherto known; indeed, in a first opera, they are remarkable judged by any standards. We are apt to forget how long an apprenticeship is generally served by even the greatest masters of the form: Verdi began with *Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio,* Wagner with *Die Feen,* Strauss with *Guntram,* Puccini with *Le Villi;* all forgotten now, even in their native lands. But all these works were written in their composers' twenties, while Britten has waited until his third decade to produce his firstling. Those additional years of study and experience he has turned to excellent account.

The moment the curtain rises (there is no overture) the spectator is seized by a powerful impression of competence. Everything happens rapidly, clearly and inevitably. The business before the Borough Court is transacted with despatch—as though music were quite the simplest and most natural of mediums in which a Coroner's Inquest could be conducted. Different though the mood is, one thinks of the opening of Verdi's *Falstaff;* there is the same effect of speed and precision. A bustling, pompous little tune gives us the self-important magistrate; a shrill figure in the wood-wind the bickering, gesticulating crowd. And Grimes? His romantic, larger-than-life personality is immediately established in purely musical terms by the remote modulations and soft string chords which underpin his slow answers and repetition of the Oath. Thus, in the first ten minutes, before any set pieces bring up the question of "inspiration," we are convinced that the composer is a born opera-writer. In the light of all that follows, this impression of naturalness, ease and sheer competence may seem a slight virtue to insist on, but it is not. It is the pre-condition which makes all the later flights of imagination possible; it is that quality, the lack of which has strewn the history of English opera with so many distinguished corpses.

Competence assured, poetry steals in with an unaccompanied duet between Grimes and the schoolmistress Ellen Orford. The curtain drops, and the flat, salty, windy coast is magically evoked in an orchestral interlude: bare grace-noted minims on the higher strings, clean arpeggios on the harp, soft chords on the brass. It looks so simple, that innate pictorialism of Britten's, which we have already admired in the *Serenade,* and now it serves so well the broader need of opera: when the curtain rises we see only what we have already heard. These preludes and interludes, of which there are six in all, form a major item in the musical design: they are about equally divided between the pictorial and the psychological. Here, almost alone, the composer unleashes the full power of the orchestra, elsewhere subduing it most carefully to allow the voices to dominate and the words to be heard; also, they are the only respect in which he departs from the generally late Verdian lay-out of the score. I am not referring to the musical idiom, but to the division of the score into set-pieces; arias, ensembles and choruses, linked by recitatives which slip insensibly into *arioso.* He shows great mastery too of a kind of operatic writing known as the *scena,* of which a notable example, containing perhaps the most expressive and touching music in the whole opera, occurs in the first scene of the second act. Here Ellen and the new apprentice sit down in the Sunday morning sunshine, while the hymns and responses of matins float out through the open church door; she talks to the boy (who won't answer) and falls into a reverie. Musically, the idea of a soprano occupied with her own troubles against a liturgical background is as old as Gounod's *Faust;* but with what freshness and skill Britten has treated it! There is the device, borrowed from broadcasting, of "fading up" and "fading down" the two component parts of the scene, and there is a subtle musical interrelation between them; as when a theme is picked up from the church service and adapted, in a most affecting manner, to form the substance of Ellen's lament. Such things are "tricks"; but, like a poet's skill in versification, they are the necessary foundation for the noblest ideas.

At a first hearing the first two acts may seem a trifle episodic. Later, the realisation that the chorus is as much the protagonist as Grimes himself partly removes this impression: we begin to see the big choral scenes, not as so much "atmosphere" or "colour," but, like those of *Boris Godunov* or *Turandot* (both of which they often recall), as one of the mainsprings of the action. The last act, however, immediately makes an impression of intense and concentrated dramatic power. There is a steady rise in the temperature of the first scene, from the rough, burlesque gaiety of the Moot Hall dances, a moment of almost Schubertian charm when the Rector goes off to water his roses, Ellen's lovely "embroidery" aria, up to the electrifying climax of that tremendous series of cries which herald the man-hunt: "Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes!" This call resounds, distant and mysterious now in the sea-mist, through the final scene, which is also punctuated by the boom of the fog-horn. This is the background of another *scena,* for the distraught Grimes, in which snatches of remembered melody, almost in the manner of the *cadenza* in Elgar's *Violin Concerto,* flicker by out of the past. As we reach the last hours before dawn, all colour and sound drain out of the world: the chorus is silent, the orchestra is silent, at last Grimes himself is silent. In the intense stillness, and with profoundly dramatic effect, occur the only lines of spoken dialogue in the work. They are spoken by the honest sea captain Balstrode: "Sail out of sight of the land, and sink your boat." Wordlessly, Grimes obeys. After a long pause, life returns: dawn breaks, the mist disperses, the music on the high strings which began Act I comes back again, the townsfolk begin to go about their daily business; we reach "the cold beginning of another day." It is a wonderful conception, which needs perhaps another two or three minutes of music for full realisation.

The performance was a triumph for Sadler's Wells. Seldom are composers so well served as was Britten by the conductor, Mr. Reginald Goodall, and the entire cast. Joan Cross has never sung or acted with so touching a gravity as in the part of Ellen Orford. There are moments in the role of Grimes which demand a sort of tenor Chaliapin; Peter Pears is not that, but he was in every other way worthy of the composer's intentions. All the singers clearly felt the unusual happiness of singing a text that did not sound (as so many English operas do) like a translation. The chorus, though on the first night the public-house "round" went badly, rose to their great moments, and, like the soloists, were wonderfully free of that depressing one-eye-on-the-conductor tradition. Eric Crozier's production was imaginative and effective, though it was a mistake not to make the fog visible, and there were times when I could have done with a little more light, and a more specifically early morning *kind* of light at the beginning and end of the main action. Kenneth Green's sets and costumes are more than beautiful: they are right. It is not his fault that the principal scene looks a bit cramped; it will look wonderful one day at Covent Garden when there is enough space between and above the necessary buildings for the great East Anglian sky.

A last word of advice to the intending spectator. Neglect Crabbe. If you have not just been reading "Ellen Orford" and "Peter Grimes," you will find it much easier to see these characters from the composer's standpoint; and you will be able to appreciate the libretto for the very skilful piece of work it is.

Desmond Shawe-Taylor

RADIO NOTES

Last Sunday I listened, for the first time, to a Spelling Bee. It will not be the last I listen to. This unpretentious form of Brains Trust is deservedly popular because it manages to combine so many things —information, *Schadenfreude* (you'd better learn this word, *and* how to spell it: there is no English equivalent), simple jokes, and what I can only describe as the atmosphere produced by a very successful conjuror. On this occasion the London housewives were a bolder team than their rivals, a row of very coy fishmongers; but I thought the level of spelling high, especially as the list of words included highbrow-stumpers like *papyraceous.* No one got that, of course; but the stunned silence of absolute failure was as amusing to listen to as the hastening crescendo of confident success. I liked the gong, too. Mr. Harold Warrender's patter made me gasp with envy, but I can't help thinking it was unfair of him to give out the word *violoncello* as if it were *violincello*: it should not be so pronounced, and if correctly spoken, renders the spelling almost phonetically. No wonder we heard the fatal gong that time. Do I hear someone in the back row asking whether orthography really matters? Wouldn't it be better to have "basic" spelling, along with the decimal system, instead of Cholmondeleys, half-crowns, Troy weight, rods, poles and perches? To which the answer is no.

Some of the best orchestral broadcasts, from the point of view of performance, now fall outside the programmes labelled "Symphony Concert." This ought not to be so, and before the war it was not so. But, just as British painters have been deprived of a standard, by the hostile occupation of Europe and the removal of the national collections from public view, so have our orchestras lost much of their former excellence, not only through the call-up, but from lack of anything to measure up to. The result, all too often, is self-satisfaction and slovenly performance of familiar works. Orchestral players, at any rate in this country, are too prone to imagine that because they happen to have played a particular piece many times, they need no longer rehearse it and certainly need not alter their tempo, bowing, etc., at the behest of a conductor whose interpretation is at all unfamiliar to them. Meanwhile the greatest of living soloists, Paul Casals, will be heard again here on June 27th (the concert is to be broadcast). His playing should awaken more than the audience.

It is some little time since I enjoyed a musical programme more than the "Songs from Country Magazine" last Sunday. These programmes which pop up from time to time, are quite admirably arranged by Francises Collinson and Dillon. The folk songs, many of which are unfamiliar, are really beautiful and extremely well adapted to modern performance; while to hear one of them sung by an untutored voice, unaccompanied, is to realise what nearly all singing sounded like, before the sixteenth century. A fascinating experience.

Recommendations.—*June 17th.* Gretchaninov: Song Cycle (Tatiana Macushina, 10.15); Kodaly: Psalmus Hungaricus (2.30).

June 18th. "The Road to Naseby" (9.35); A. E. Housman (talk, with readings, by Prof. H. W. Garrod, 10.50).

June 19th. Suk: Fairy Tale Suite (7.0).

June 20th. Symphony Concert (7.15).

June 21st. "What's the Difference?" (Poetry and Dance Lyrics, 1.15); Violin Sonatas (Albert Sammons and Gerald Moore, 6.20); "Down the Chimney" (Story of Combat Cargo Task Force, 7.10); Henry IV, Episode 4 (9.45).

June 22nd. "Jet Propulsion" (Talk, 7.45); "How it was Written: Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*" (8.20); The Arts (Michael Ayrton and Leonard Greaves, 10.15).

June 23rd. Prokofiev: Second Violin Concerto (2.30).

Edward Sackville West

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Jacobowsky and the Colonel"

The "comedy" at the Piccadilly Theatre, *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, by Franz Werfel, adapted by S. N. Behrman, shows episodically the escape from France in 1940, organised by an ingenious Jew, of a Polish colonel and his French love. This tragic theme is treated as whimsey, farce and melodrama.

The author has failed in his intention that by the end of the evening the sycophantic Jacobowsky, who tries so hard to be loved, should be loved by the audience. Mr. Karel Stepanek, in spite of his indefatigable cheerfulness and music-hall asides, could not make Jacobowsky appear sympathetic (the almost incessant repetition of his name is an irritant rather than an effective theatrical device) and we agree with the Colonel when he rather unwittily says, "You may be one of the chosen, but you're not chosen by me."

Mr. Michael Redgrave's quixotic Colonel, whom the Jew considers a "Schlemiel," dominates the play. He enjoys his opportunity for a bravura performance and his enthusiasm is infectious. The talents of Miss Rachel Kempson cannot bring colour of reality to the part of the French girl. Mr. Esmé Percy, an actor with an astonishing number of remarkable performances to his credit, in a minute part, brings touches of healthy solemnity to the rather baffling proceedings.

Mr. Redgrave has done much excellent work on the production, which in his critic's eyes, is altogether superior to that (in which it must be admitted Jacobowsky was no more sympathetically portrayed) which ran for so many months in New York.

THE MOVIES

"Experiment Perilous," at the Tivoli

Surprise: *Experiment Perilous* is a well-made film. By well-made I mean much the same as when one describes a book as being well-written; and not one film in a hundred is thus "well-written." The "writing," in fact—the direction, co-ordination of image and sound, editing, cutting—of the great majority of films is deplorable. How often have we seen films in which scene after scene ends with the characters, their words spoken, staring into space during a slow fade-out. This is the equivalent of a novel in which every paragraph was written as though it were the last paragraph. Imagine what that would be like to read! "'Goodbye.' She put down the telephone, resigned, listless, wondering where next to turn in a world that promised no more than the wind-swept street seen through the blurred panes of the call-box." But why don't we rebel against the heavy ineptitude of such methods in a film? Partly, I think, because few of us ever bother to notice what we are looking at on a screen. We catch the general meaning, we follow the story, we gobble up clichés galore, preferring indeed an easy flow of clichés because that reduces the need of attention to the minimum. The well-made film requires, and repays, attention just as does the book that is not merely slopped on to paper.

The pleasure, then, of seeing *Experiment Perilous* is that here, for a change, is something to enjoy looking at. The director, Jacques Tourneur, has a style. He doesn't underline, he doesn't meander, he moves quickly and quietly from shot to shot, he employs time skilfully to gather his threads in a single direction, he makes a new and effective use of spoken reverie. Example: A man and a woman are going home in a taxi. The man has just received an important letter, the contents of which he doesn't wish to divulge to his companion. As they stare into the camera without speaking, we hear what is in the letter spoken in an undertone. His thoughts are interrupted by the woman asking something in connection with the letter. "What?" he says, coming out of his reverie abruptly. The effect of that broken train of thought is dramatic in a way which the usual technique—or lack of it—would altogether miss. So, all through the film, the director is sensitive to his medium: notice, for example, the changes of lighting, the sometimes abrupt transition of sound, the slushy weather, that help to create an oppression the story needs. It is the story (in the 1900's) of a rich man who has brought up a country girl to be his wife, who grows jealous of her and her admirers, and attempts in subtle ways to drive her mad. He doesn't stop short of murder. The part of this polite maniac is excellently played by Paul Lukas, and George Brent as the doctor who prises open his secret and tells bits of the narrative in the first person gives the most sustained performance of his career. Hedy Lamarr, pretty as a picture, is appealing, not much more. I look forward to Jacques Tourneur's next film.

The newsreels this week have made a scoop of one of the most dramatic stories of the war. The U.S. aircraft-carrier "Franklin" was bombed by a low-flying Jap plane 60 miles from the Japanese coast. A series of appalling explosions followed; eight hundred men were killed; the flames were fought down, and the "Franklin" made its way unassisted through the Panama canal to New York. All this was filmed on the spot. Even among newsreels from the Pacific—when put together they will make probably the most vivid and extraordinary film of the war—this heroic of the "Franklin" must take first place.

William Whitebait

STATESMAN AND NATION

Great Churchill speaks, and every Ear attends,
As into the Arena he descends,
Hotspur in Temper, Burke in Eloquence
To win a public vote of Confidence.
High-handed Liberals he first reproves,
As one whom Sorrow more than Anger moves,
Who, shamed by Tory measures of Reform,
So massive, so adventurous, so warm,
Disdain as Nationals to be returned.
Then, speaking as the Spurner, not the spurned,
On Labour's leaders and their rank and file,
Lets loose the Torrent of his splendid bile.
He Labour, double-dyed and double-faced,
Denounces for their hot election Haste,
For putting Country last and Party first,
(In Alien Ideologies immersed)
While Tories, guiltless of such knavish Tricks,
And undefiled by Party Politics,
Are, like Old England, left to stand alone
Or see the Constitution overthrown.
Next, ripping off the Coalition mask
He shows the Left at their subversive Task,
Their vile totalitarian Design
Our Liberties and Laws to undermine.
The Left, to put mere Theories to the test,
Would rob the Nation's nest-egg from the Nest,
The whole machine of Industry reverse,
And even monkey with the Public Purse,
Would smash the Tories great industrial Ring
And thus enslave the subjects of the King.
Great Churchill, spokesman for the diehard ranks,
Fears for the Realm and trembles for the Banks,
Resolves to keep the Nation's Great Assize
The appanage of Private Enterprise.
Betrayal of small Savers he foresees,
And ruin for Suburban Mortgagees.
"Beware," he cries, "the Worship of the State!
The Left bamboozles the Electorate!
Vote Left and starve, but prosperously live
By voting National Conservative!"

So Churchill speaks; his Hearers quake and gasp,
Lock up their Wealth, their nest-eggs closer clasp,
But afterwards, in Retrospect enquire,
If Socialists so treacherously conspire,
If Coalition Labour Ministers
Were Freedom's enemies and Saboteurs,
Instead of sharing Churchill's finest hour,
Why were they not beheaded in the Tower?
And why did Churchill not at least explain
How such could be invited to remain?
Was it not Tories who broke up the Team?
And Labour victim of a Party scheme,
While Churchill lends the Magic of his name
To keep the People, like the Commons, tame.
Never did Churchill's voice win less Applause—
Illustrious Pleader for a sordid Cause,
The Voice that could of old for Britain speak
Becomes the Trumpet of a Tory Clique.

Sagittarius

Correspondence

FRANCE, BRITAIN AND SYRIA

Sir,—In view of the very biased reports which seem to be reaching the British press and radio about Syria, the following facts might be of interest coming as they do from someone who has been intimately associated with the French forces in the Levant throughout the present troubles.

(1) It is stated that the French acted in a provocative and brutal manner towards the native population; it was even stated in one report that cannon had opened fire on the Syrian Parliament while a session was in progress. The facts are that the French had taken no action for several weeks while French officers were stabbed, French property pillaged and cars burned, and that the Parliament building was only attacked after Syrian gendarmerie had opened fire from it on the French G.H.Q.

(2) The Radio tells us that British troops have now restored order, though the situation was calm in Damascus 24 hours before they arrived. Since the arrival of these troops several more French have been killed by the Syrians, homes pillaged and the families of native troops loyal to the French have been beaten up. Encouragement to rioting has undoubtedly been given by the action of the British forces in invading a French camp and liberating all the prisoners in full view of all the native troops.

(3) The French are very anxious to know the answer to two questions:

(*a*) Who supplied the Syrians with the machine-guns with which they managed to carry on a battle for several days?

(*b*) Why was the situation so exaggerated in reports to London that Mr. Churchill (acting in a manner extraordinarily similar to his action in Greece) found it necessary to order General Paget to send his tanks in before consultation with de Gaulle?

It should be realised in England that the British action—and still more the manners and conduct of some of the people engaged in carrying it out—has caused more resentment than any incident in Anglo-French history since Fashoda. During the war and the liberation of Europe, friendship between the people of Britain and France has become a very real thing. Unless the British Government shows by actions and not just by endless repetition, that its aim here is not just the crude one of chasing the French out of the Levant, the consequencies for Europe are going to be terrible.

Damascus. British Officer in Syria

SUDETEN GERMANS

Sir,—Were we not preoccupied with our election, the case stated by Wenzel Jaksch and his colleagues against the expulsion of the entire German population from Czechoslovakia would make an irresistible appeal to the judgment of the British people. The scale of this enforced migration is staggering, for if 700,000 Hungarians are added to the 3,300,000 Sudeten Germans, the total exceeds the whole population of Denmark or Finland. They are not recent intruders: this country has been their home for seven centuries. Where are they to go? If they are thrust into the diminished Reich they will aggravate a congestion which means already mass-unemployment with famine in prospect. If they are deported to Russia, an even harsher fate awaits them. In either event, a skilled labour force will be withdrawn from industries and mines, whose products an impoverished Continent sorely needs.

What is the ground for this sentence of extinction against an entire community? It may be said with truth that some of these people shared in the crimes and oppressions of the Nazis. The proper course is to punish or expel the leading Nazis among them and to give the rest the option between Czech or German citizenship: the guilty will be eager to depart. But no less an authority than Dr. Ripka has stated that "at least one-third of the Sudeten German population" was always anti-Nazi. It is true that in the latter phases of a long crisis, Henlein secured a majority of the electorate. That was due, in part, to economic distress, which brought prolonged unemployment to over 400,000 of these German workers. But Henlein, let us not forget, professed at these elections loyalty to the Republic, and asked for nothing more than Home Rule. He could point in making that demand to the unfulfilled undertaking Dr. Benes gave to the Peace Conference, "to make of the Czecho-slovak Republic a sort of Switzerland."

If the case for expelling this German population rests on the attitude it adopted before Munich, what figure will the British Government cut in history if it consents to this act of vengeance? We may all deplore it to-day, but the fact is that with the support of this Parliament, which is not yet dissolved, it backed the extremist solution of this Sudeten problem and enforced the cession of this territory. The Opposition, Labour and Liberal, protested against this surrender to military pressure, but a study of its speeches and newspapers would show that on grounds of policy and justice it asked the Czechs to concede what the Sudetens demanded—territorial autonomy. My own view at the time was that full cultural autonomy would be the safer and wiser solution. The all-but-unanimous view of the British people was then, in 1938, that this German population had a case which entitled it at least to Home Rule. Is it worthy of us now to consent to the extreme penalty against a community whose claims we so far supported?

The motive of the Czechs, it may be argued, is not revenge, but concern for their future safety. How often and in how many ways must the Czechs reinsure themselves against the German danger? If Germany is totally disarmed, if she loses her war-potential and her Eastern provinces, is not the Russian alliance a sufficient guarantee, with the San Francisco Charter in the background? The strategic isolation of the Czech Republic, which was her undoing in 1938, is now a thing of the past, since Russian territory touches hers, while her two hostile neighbours, Poland and Hungary, are, with Austria, in the orbit of Moscow.

There is at work in this business a policy that has no connection with safety. It is significant that no one proposes to expel or even to penalise the Slovak population, though its Fascist leaders will be punished. Yet it accepted German protection and stabbed the Republic in the back, and this it did without the excuse of racial kinship. I am not sure that even a third of it was at that time loyal, as so many of the Sudeten Germans were. The difference in the two cases is that the Slovaks are Slavs and the dominant tendency in Prague, as in Warsaw and Belgrade, is now Pan-Slavist. The Nazis have, indeed, been crushed, but they have left behind them as an accursed legacy their racial theory in a new form, and with it, for our invitation, their models of ruthlessness.

On two things those of us who care for the restoration of civilised values in Europe have a right to insist. In the first place any sifting and any expulsion, however limited, of this German population should be postponed, until it can be done in an orderly way. In the second place, this question cannot be settled without the participation of the British and American Governments, to whom and not solely to the Russians, the Czechs owe their liberation.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

SIR,—It must be a deep comfort to Mr. Wenzel Jakseh and his colleagues to know that Critic appreciates their anguish of mind, while condoning—it is impossible to draw any other inference—the denial of "full minority rights within a multi-national State." But, Sir, is it not time that we stopped using the word "unrealistic" to describe policies and principles which we know in our hearts to be right but tremble to pursue? Mr. Chamberlain was "realistic" at Munich. Sir Samuel Hoare and M. Laval were "realistic about" Abyssinia. And was there ever a greater realist than Pontius Pilate? I confess I find it a little surprising that a writer in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION should use realistic in the sense of "appeasement."

14 Kensington Square. ANTHONY ASQUITH

[Critic writes: "Mr. Asquith does me an injustice. I did not say that Czech policy towards the Sudetens—I have always opposed wholesale expulsion—was realistic, but that Wenzel Jaksch was unrealistic in demanding "full minority rights" for Sudetens, as such, in view of their record and the violence of Czech feeling. I know and respect Jaksch, but I have never thought his policy best calculated to serve the interests of his anti-Nazi comrades or of the 800,000 Sudetens, whom only a few months ago the Czech Government proposed to leave in their homes. If the Czechs now really intend to throw to the winds the safeguards and the discrimination with which they intended to temper the policy of expulsion, I should regard this as a policy of revenge, not of realism."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

ELECTION WHISPERS

SIR,—On two occasions during this week, making my daily journey from Shelford to Liverpool Street I have been told by Yanks, who were my travelling companions (I had not met any of them before and merely got into conversation with them, as a North countryman will) that Attlee had stated in a first broadcast speech something to the effect that the Japanese war was none of our business and could be left to the Yanks to fight out alone. Why should I get it from two distinct parties and does it represent some insidious Tory line? I wonder.

Have any other of your readers met this rumour?

Great Shelford. JAMES KEARSLEY

PLEBISCITES

SIR,—As far as I know, no one has pointed out the ominousness of the fourth sentence of Churchill's recent electoral broadcast. This sentence runs: "I could only be relieved of that duty [i.e. to consult the people] by the full agreement of the three parties and, in addition, perhaps, fortified by a kind of official Gallup poll."

Had this arrangement been carried out, a dangerous precedent would have been created. It would have given sanction to government by agreement between the party bosses supported by a controlled referendum. I say "controlled" because a Gallup poll consults only a selected number of people, and the party bosses would have little difficulty in making sure that they themselves controlled the selection.

Moreover, Churchill said "in addition *perhaps.*" How long would it be before the party bosses forgot even this proviso?

And what if one of the three parties were to die out—by no means an improbability? We should be left with government by agreement between two sets of party bosses. The advent of an unscrupulous element in one set would lead to the liquidation of the other set and its party machine. How far should we be then from the Hitlerite state?

We must watch carefully for any reappearance of this suggestion. F. W. HAGGER

KING AND COUNTRY

SIR,—The dessicated body of the Oxford Union resolution has been dragged out of its grave again as one of the causes of the War. Once again it is Mr. Quintin Hogg who has resuscitated the corpse.

There are three aspects to the resolution which do not appear to register in Mr. Hogg's mind.

Firstly, it was passed at a time when the Government of the day were actively concealing from the public the true state of affairs in Germany.

Secondly, if one examines the wording of the resolution, it says nothing about refusal to fight for an ideal, the resolution consisted solely of a refusal to fight for a formula.

Thirdly, if one recalls for a moment the incredible ineptitude of the British foreign policy between the two Wars, if one recalls the bewildering series of blunders starting at Versailles and finishing at Munich, if one recalls the Government's attitude to the Japanese aggression, Abyssinia, Spain, the policy of appeasement—to name only the most obvious manifestations

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JONATHAN CAPE

of the disastrous incompetence characterising our foreign policy, and finally, if one recalls that a Tory government was in power during almost the whole of the time, it is asking a little too much for these same Tories to have us believe that any blame lies in a resolution passed by a handful of students.

1 Inglewood Road, N.W.6. W. A. West

CONTROL AND INFLATION

Sir,—May I state the case of a man who, through many sweaty years, has painfully saved £1,200 for the purpose of buying himself (*a*) a house, £1,000; (*b*) a car, £200.

He now finds that the house will cost him £3,000, and the car £600.

He has seen two-thirds of his savings shrivel away, for lack of controls, yet some prominent and influential people propose to remove more controls, and create more inflation.

Is there some humbug or hypocrisy in the air?

These are scarcity values, but perhaps the influential persons pin their faith to scarcity values, and prefer to be governed by blind economic laws.

W. Morrison

MARTIN LUTHER

Sir,—Dr. Martin Luther detestable? A violent, cruel, fanatical, toadying and hypocritical monk? Sir, if this judgment upon one of the great, outstanding figures in European history reflects the spirit of the re-education which is now being imposed upon a great people, a nation which, despite all her faults and misdeeds, has contributed no mean share to the progress of culture and civilisation, then may God help Germany and the rest of the world.

Luther was great precisely because his courage, his uprightness and his common sense were the opposite of the hypocrisy and narrowmindedness and cowardliness of the monks and priests of his time. They were his foremost enemies, and he fought them bravely. He was no saint, oh no! He had his weaknesses and limitations and contradictions as every human being has; but can well-proportioned thought be underlying a judgment which epitomises as detestable, toadying, hypocritical, etc., etc., the character of a man who was capable of creating a masterpiece of literary art, whose words and deeds show that spiritual independence which is the very opposite of a monkish mentality; who affixed his denunciation of the indulgences to the cathedral door in Wittenburg; who publicly burned the pope's Bull that excommunicated him; who loved music and cheerfulness; who, above all, stood firm at the Diet of Worms, and whose *Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir, amen!*" became proverbial in the German language and is used to express the idea of loyalty in great matters and in small?

Detestable, toadying, hypocritical monk indeed!

E.W.

FURTWANGLER

Sir,—In your leader of June 2nd, you use the words: "Furtwängler who for long protected his Jewish musicians against the Nazis, has put his orchestra to work."

In view of the possible return of foreign visiting musicians to this country it would seem timely to inquire why, when his Jewish musicians were forced to leave, Herr Furtwängler did not leave with them, as a protest. Other distinguished German artists preferred to make this protest and left the country.

Herr Furtwängler is now conducting Mendelssohn's music in Berlin; but when ordered by his Nazi superiors to delete *e.g.* a work by Mendelssohn from a programme in Budapest, he obeyed.

Dorothy Moulton Mayer

WHERE TO PUT A FACTORY

Sir,—I should like to question certain statements made by my friend Mr. Kingsley Martin in his article "Where to Put a Factory." While agreeing with the broad principle that coherent planning is necessary for the control of post-war building, I cannot help feeling that the arguments on which he bases his objection to the building of a small factory and group of workers' cottages in his district are largely fallacious. To take some of them in their order. He says: "No one can say whether they are country or town." Why should they be either? "The fields and woods behind the developed front become sterilised country." What is "sterilised" country? Does Mr. Martin mean that it becomes infertile? The phrase seems to bear no metaphorical interpretation. Why does it become sterilised? "The fields and woodlands lose much of their farming value and their beauty is wasted." In what way do they lose farming value; and is not their beauty only "wasted" to the people who drive along the main road? The people who live in the cottages will enjoy the beauty in their daily lives. "The unfortunate dwellers in the cottages have no communal life; they belong to no living tradition; they are far from the amenities of the town and they have none of the alternative advantages of country life." I maintain that, on the contrary, the dwellers in the cottages enjoy the unspoiled country that lies behind them, they have all the advantages of country life, and the additional convenience—and no one who has not lived in the deep country *without a car* can realise the greatness of the convenience—of a bus service from their own doors to the nearest town.

While realising that in an ordered society the well-being of the few must occasionally be sacrificed for the æsthetic pleasure of the many, I hardly expected to find Mr. Martin putting the case so bluntly. As he says, "the workers in the area very naturally regard this as a snobbish and selfish point of view." I feel reasonably sure that if Mr. Martin consulted the dwellers in the cottages he would find them in a perhaps equally selfish state of satisfaction.

Hawkley, Hants. Winifred Roberts

[Miss Roberts agrees that planning is necessary for post-war building. In that case she must be on my side in this argument which is simply that if factory owners can disregard local scheduling no planning is possible and chaos certain. Neither she nor anyone else, except a few builders, can really profit by ribbon development and haphazard industrialisation.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

"SWEET LIBERTY"

Sir,—I think perhaps I ought to point out a possible misapprehension in Critic's paragraph last week about our play, "Sweet Liberty." The Lord Chamberlain's Office did not give as a reason for refusing a licence that the play satirised public figures—this idea was somehow mysteriously imported through the editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*. The Lord Chamberlain's objections:

"The Lord Chamberlain gave very careful consideration to this play and then sought the advice of the Foreign Office; hence the long but unavoidable delay. The Foreign Office confirmed his Lordship's doubts as to the desirability of licensing a play at the present time which makes International Co-operation and the Cultural Minority problem a subject of farce and an opportunity for a mud-slinging contest, in which at times the aim is embarrassingly accurate. In the opinion of the Foreign Office, apart from certain speeches which would undoubtedly give great offence to both our American and Russian Allies, the theme of your play is likely to be misunderstood and resented by the Russians in particular, and so to be harmful to Anglo-Russian relations."

As Critic has read the play, I need not comment on the appositeness or otherwise of this account of it. But the first part of the objection, implying that this kind of subject is to be regarded as sacred and immune from any humorous approach, seems to me more serious from the public point of view than any question of personalities. I am sure I need not stress to you where such an assumption might lead—more especially as it is adopted on the "advice" of a Foreign Secretary whose party is so ostentatiously against controls!

St. Hilda, Cranbrook. Muriel Jaeger

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Poil de Carotte—you saw the film, perhaps, or you heard of the play. This is an age in which the majority of things, from church services to salmon, are experienced at second-hand, and it may be that *Poil de Carotte*, in some form other than the original (how we must detest originals !), has crossed your path. The memory, then, sharp but unlocalised, would be of a sensitive-savage child and its tyrant mother, of seething family discord, of the terror that can lie hid in a simple nickname. Poil . . . . de . . . Carotte ! The window is flung up, the accusing Madame Lepic transfixes us with a sneer, her unlucky offspring shivers on the roadway or in the rabbit-hutch—wherever at the moment he chances to be lurking, certain that unjust Heaven will find him out. Once heard, the summons is never forgotten ; it finds echoes in our own childhood, happy or unhappy though that may have been. Moments of injustice, of conspiracy. . . . If, that is, even remotely one has heard of Poil de Carotte ; if not, it can convey nothing more, I suppose, than would the mention of a story called *Freckles.*

Jules Renard's *Poil de Carotte*, easily the best novel of childhood, was published in 1895. The best ? Its rival would be found (if anywhere) in the early pages of certain autobiographies, of Rousseau, of De Quincey, of Tolstoy ; fragmentarily, that is to say, among writers whose ambition it was to give at least as much to truth as to art. The double devotion is among novelists exceedingly rare. For them memory is a wad of banknotes, each of which, with the forger's expertise, can be split and split again. We are grateful to them for a time—dear me, how he spends !—not noticing any thinness in the currency until a real banknote comes along. Then we exclaim ; the more stupid among us push it away—clumsy thing ! Renard puts such a bank-note in our hand. Both sides are genuine. He has created and recreated at the same time ; extreme, even finicky, as an artist, he adheres everywhere to life, with a tough fibre that the sentimental may find shocking. Give us back our forgeries ! In other fields, once the preserve of the dreamer, we have grown accustomed to realism ; Donne's lovers, Shakespeare's old men, Ibsen's and Flaubert's deluded heroines, Baudelaire's twilight streets, Hopkins's countryside have acclimatised us to worlds at once ideal and actual. But there remain gaps where the visionary and the whimsy-grubber flourish unchallenged. One is the child's world. Since the eighteenth century there have been deluges of books for and about children, but few really convincing pictures of childhood. The accepted masterpieces are miles away: *David Copperfield*, a touching enough fiction but seen through the wrong end of a telescope that could envisage Pickwicks and Chuzzlewits by the score ; *Huckleberry Finn*—even *Huck Finn* with its idiom and its claim to be considered the first book of its kind in English. In the whole of literature only a few poems of Rimbaud seem to me to stir the wild intensity, the loves and hatreds, the slow suffocation that every child grows up to forget. Rimbaud, and Blake for a hop, skip and a jump—until we come to Renard.

"L'Enfant," notes Renard in his journal, "Victor Hugo et bien d'autres l'ont vu ange. C'est féroce et infernal qu'il faut le voir. D'ailleurs la littérature sur l'enfant ne peut être renouvellée qui si l'on se place à ce point de vue. Il faut casser l'enfant en sucre. . . ." Two-thirds true, and true all the way for Renard. The sugar-children, the Little Lord Fauntleroys and Christopher Robins, don't die so easily ; confectioners in every generation will offer us new effigies to gobble up, with all the incurable passion of the sweet tooth. Watch, in a crowded bus or tube carriage, the theatrical smiles that follow a babe in arms : royalty couldn't exact more. The little ones : simple phrase, with a Bible dignity behind it, but how our insincerity makes it smell ! We grow up and forget, we kill the child in ourselves, we create a sickly puppet in its place, and those of us who have children force them (luckless savages !) into the swaddling bands and tight suits of fancy. In this process of mummification literature, which tends always to flatter romantic illusions, has played a not unimportant part. Just as the neurotic Emma Bovary fed her dissatisfaction on novels and gambled everything on being a heroine, so Poil de Carotte finds himself struggling in a world of pre-conceived fictions which thwart, maim, and clap a hand over the mouth at every turn. Flaubert disenchants us of our golden dream of adultery ; Renard blows away the trailing clouds of infancy, unpins the tinsel wings. His Poil de Carotte is the "petit animal nécessaire" of a household where he has intruded just in time to cement his parents' mutual detestation. Has he hair of a dullish red ? Then call him Carrots. Is he timid, ugly, sensitive, undersized ? Give him the cruellest jobs, make him dance. Make him cunning, ridiculous, ashamed. Any child, given this encouragement, will grow up thinking himself a monster.

Round this core of fiendish struggle are wrapped the amenities and queernesses of family life. Literature, for Renard, begins at home ; and thick and fast, in the delicately caustic lighting, come revelations of this household. They live in middling comfort on the outskirts of a village. They have few visitors. A blind beggar calls once a month on Sunday mornings. The children with hair plastered down go off regularly to church. A partridge or a hare hangs in the cellar. In the evening, as they are sitting round, the dog barks at nothing, and the whole family gets up to let fly at him. They like it to snow on New Year's Day. They are silent over their meals, which are taken in the kitchen. When one day Madame Lepic addresses her husband directly and asks for "just a crumb to finish my fruit with," she gets it flipped in her face. M. Lepic, morose, disinterested, spends most of his leisure out shooting. It is a family like any other.

Their idiosyncrasy, their heaped-up exasperation, falls on Poil de Carotte. His mother—taskmaster of subtly devised tortures—leads the dance, at which an elder brother and sister assist gleefully. It is the family pastime. "Poil de Carotte !" "Oui, maman." So, time and again, it begins ; and off he goes into the dark to shut up the chickens, because anyone else, of course, would be scared stiff ; trembling, he has to wring the necks of the partridges which M. Lepic throws on the table after a day's shooting ; he is manœuvred into misbehaving himself in the locked bedroom, or made to steal and then gloriously denounced ; shoved here, dragged there, into false positions from which he is lucky to escape with a smack and a talking-to. Madame Lepic has made a study of seeming virtuous and of putting her youngest child in the wrong. She does it like daily exercises. No day, however devoid of occasion, would be complete without its lesson.

> *Madame Lepic :* "Poil de Carotte, réponds donc quand on te parle."
>
> *Poil de Carotte :* "Boui, baban."
>
> *Madame Lepic :* "Il me semble t'avoir déja dit que les enfants ne doivent jamais parler la bouche pleine."

She never loses in this game of cat and mouse which has been going on for ten, for fifteen years. It is her consolation for having earned the hatred of her husband. Poil de Carotte would hand her the stick he is to be beaten with and she would thank him before using it. How could it be otherwise ? They understand one another perfectly. She shares everything with him, so that when she's not hungry he must go without, too ; shares with him on occasion even her bed, and nips him atrociously on the behind should he snore, which he inevitably does. This is the situation into which Renard plunges the reader, in the present tense, through a series of semi-dramatic scenes, combining the elaboration of stage-direction with fastidiously told anecdote. One event impends ; Poil de Carotte's final deliverance from his slavery. Until that happens each curtain-raiser lets us into some new peculiarity of the family, adds one more brick to the tower that will topple over when Poil de Carotte turns to face his tormentor. It is easy enough, this inconceivable happening, when the time comes. "Go and fetch a pound of butter at the mill, Poil de Carotte." "No, mamma." "Go on, I say, and don't argue." "No, mamma." Madame Lepic screams, calls in the neighbours, goes to bed with a headache. It's all over. Poil de Carotte has grown up.

So far as one ever does grow up. (The process of amputations by which most people attain to old age can hardly be called that.) Renard's childhood remained with him all his life : in the historic present. He couldn't dismiss Poil de Carotte and returned to the name, with rueful affection, as he lay dying. He had grown up ironical, exacting, timid, and the cruelties he had suffered in childhood are passed on to the reader in the form of a cruelly precise valuation of human nature, beginning with himself. There is no more extraordinary monument to the individual in the whole of literature than his 1,000-page journal built up of minute, indestructible impressions. The Journal, which many would regard as his masterpiece, is both a prolonged self-study and the workshop in which day after day he chiselled out the themes and the phrases of his inspiration. *En tranches, en petites tranches, en tout petites tranches.* Everything (hear the badgered child speaking) must be personal, exact, incontrovertible, new. His aim was to produce a *littérature contre la littérature*, an art insisting on fact, true not to type but to the individual. He planned a book to be called *L'Herbe*, in which everyone at Chitry-les-Mines, from the Mayor to the gardener's pig, every household, every tree, every stone would find its place. Such a book perhaps, a coral-reef of the brooding imagination, is the Journal, and Renard, who had begun as a *petit animal nécessaire*, ended by being elected Mayor ; this election probably pleased him as much as the honours of the Académie Goncourt. His other books, in the form of novels, plays, stories, anecdotes, spring from this one as might twenty oaks from a field in which one had tipped a lorry-load of acorns. *Poil de Carotte* is the first and on the whole, I think, the most satisfactory of these, because here his fastidious acerbity is strengthened by a dramatic theme ; but *L'Ecornifleur* (novel of adolescence), *Histoires Naturelles* (witty and lyrical characters of animals), and *Ragotte* (dossier of an old village servant) run it close. For the devoted admirer of Renard there are a dozen or so volumes beside, all worth cultivating. But one returns to *Poil de Carotte.* Not only is it the most ingrained of his books, the one he couldn't conceivably have escaped writing ; it fills a gap in literature as does *Hedda Gabler* or *Oblomov* or *The Egoist.* Without *Poil de Carotte* there would be—what ? Jules Vallès's *L'Enfant* before, Hughes's *Highwind in Jamaica* after. Still a gap.

I have returned to it lately myself as translator. Where, alas, is the English to render the full flavour of a prose that, with all the elegances, pulls a monkey-face at the reader ? For Renard is not a realist in the drab sense ; he celebrates his village not like Crabbe, but rather as Pope might have done.

> Content with little, I can piddle here
> On broccoli and mutton round the year. . . .

The wit, the flocking images that give point to even the least of Renard's pieces are almost gaudy. He will describe tame rabbits, for example, as "bits of fluff, fashionably coifed, with their noses stuck in the air" ; then, as they sit up waiting to be fed, their front paws catch his eye, and a new image takes over—they are drummer-boys at attention. Such embossments of wit and vision raise everywhere a subject-matter that might be otherwise flat and harsh. The tiny tiered phrases delight with a perfection no less comely and balanced than the Popian couplet. Renard is that rarity among writers, a prose-poet with something more than dreams and sensations to impart. Just as his Journal is a repository of the images that may become poems, the witticisms that would make a story, so in his finished work there are passages that flower as suddenly and completely as the almond. Such, in *Poil de Carotte*, is the " Tempête de Feuilles," of which I can quote only the beginning :

> Il y a longtemps que Poil de Carotte, rêveur, observe la plus haute feuille du grand peuplier.
>
> Il songe creux et attend qu'elle remue.
>
> Elle semble, détachée de l'arbre, vivre à part, seule, sans queue, libre.
>
> Chaque jour elle se dore au premier et au dernier rayon du soleil.
>
> Depuis midi, elle garde une immobilité de morte, plutôt tache que feuille, et Poil de Carotte perd patience, mal à son aise, lorsqu' enfin elle fait un signe.
>
> Au-dessous d'elle une feuille proche fait le même signe. D'autres feuilles le répètent, le communiquent aux feuilles voisines qui le passent rapidement.
>
> Et c'est un signe d'alarme car, à l'horizon, paraît l'ourlet d'une calotte brune.
>
> Le peuplier déjà frissonne. Il tente de se mouvoir, de déplacer les couches d'air qui le gênent.
>
> Son inquiétude gagne le hêtre, un chêne, des marroniers, et tous les arbres du jardin s'avertissent, par gestes, qu'au ciel la calotte s'élargit, pousse en avant sa bordure nette et sombre.
>
> D'abord, ils excitent leurs branches minces et font taire les oiseaux, la merle qui lancait une note au hasard, comme un pois cru, la tourterelle que Poil de Carotte voyait tout à l'heure verser, par saccades, les roucoulements de sa gorge peinte, et la pie insupportable avec sa queue de pie.
>
> Puis ils mettent leurs gros tentacules en branle pour effrayer l'ennemi.
>
> La calotte livide continue son invasion lourde.
>
> Elle voûte peu à peu le ciel. Elle refoule l'azur, bouche les trous qui laisseraient passer l'air, prépare l'étouffement de Poil de Carotte. . . .

By small degrees the enveloping cloud, the sudden wind, the trees dancing in a fury of rain, descend on the page ; and when it is almost over, it lingers on in the mind of the crouching boy. *Poil de Carotte ! Poil de Carotte ! Où diable se trouve t'il ?*

G. W. STONIER

COUNTRY PLANNING

Country Planning. By C. S. ORWIN. *Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.*

One would expect that any survey team captained by C. S. Orwin would give a pretty good account of itself, but the excellence of " Country Planning "—the book resulting from its labours—suggests a quite exceptional imaginative skill in those responsible. What Rowntree did for York, the venerable provincial city; what the Bournville Trust did for Birmingham, the transitional industrial con-urbation; the Orwin commando has now resoundingly done for rural England. Very simply it took, more or less at random, a single Midland sheet of the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map and then, very subtly, proceeded to note, analyse and report upon just everything it chanced to find within that arbitrary rectangle—from climate to clergy, from water supplies to the W.E.A., from Land girls to Local Government ; in short, the whole human ecology of the accidental twenty-four square miles, the 15,000 acres of variegated rusticity that fell within its survey area.

And what *did* it find ? A set-up disturbingly obsolete or obsolescent and inefficient in its lay-out, organisation and equipment, yet here and there encouragingly shot through with enlightened enterprise, intelligent innovation and co-operative goodwill. The good people are there as well as the good earth, both simply waiting for new knowledge to be actually applied that the one may become fully civilised and the other fully productive.

It is a commonplace that country communications were laid out by the cows, and that the spacing of country towns was dictated by the horse, but it is humiliating to find how much more intelligently they achieved their share of country planning than did the men who determined the size and shape of farms. Or perhaps it would be fairer to Homo Sapiens merely to remark that the animals' own arrangements seem to have worn better and to have been less out-moded than have his.

Give a blind old man with twitching, fumbling hands a sheet of plywood and a fret-saw and ask him to cut it up just anyhow into one hundred and twenty-three random pieces of just any shape and size and, that done, tell him to play Donkey's Tail with them and jab a pin into each no matter where, and you would get an excellent notion of the farm lay-out in this Survey area, and of the setting of the farm houses and steadings in relation to each holding.

A crazy, picturesque, lovable and now quite indefensibly inefficient and uneconomic jig-saw puzzle, to be largely explained but scarcely excused by the fact that we formed our present farms out of the tangled patchwork of strip cultivation inherited from the Middle Ages, with later enclosures botched on just as might be. And when Mr. Orwin points out that the 13,000 acres of farm land that concern him belong to no less than 112 separate estates, ranging in size from under five acres to over a thousand, and further mentions that in a six-mile point cross-country you will find yourself crossing 27 farm boundaries and 23 different estates, the need for rationalisation and the recasting of workable economic agricultural units seems shamefully obvious. He shows a map of the noduled and crenellated farm boundaries as they are, another with the land reallotted in the light of reason and of modern practice, natural features and soil differences being all duly considered in the new deal. He shows just how much would be saved in boundary fencing, how much in the daily mileage of internal coming and going, in services, in tractor cultivation, in time and temper and general wear and tear. Much as there is about the urgent need for the redistribution of land, there is nothing overt or explicit as to Land Nationalisation, though the demand for that step seems implicit in the whole analysis.

There is nothing wild or speculative about this most carefully documented book, which should be widely read, more especially by planners. The extravagant futility of planning rural water supplies parish by parish is vividly illustrated, the need for flat-rate public services and the prerequisite need for grouped and neighbourly housing as against isolated scattering.

The book is as remarkable for the detailed care of its diagnosis as for the seeming wisdom of its prescription, and one paragraph from its final summary will sufficiently indicate its scope :—

> The life of the countryman, as exemplified by conditions in the Survey area, has been followed from the pre-natal clinic to the old-age pension—his education, his adolescence and employment, his housing, health, citizenship, social life and recreations.
>
> All these and some other things, it has been suggested, are one complex making up the countryman's life and they should be considered together, not in isolation, in any attempt to give him better physical conditions and more opportunities for social and economic advancement.
>
> Nor is it only the country worker who is involved, for it is impossible to solve his problems in many of the villages and smaller towns without considering how to reintroduce some form of industrial life to supplement the agricultural, and to recreate that more varied society, with its wider opportunities and interests, which has been lost to them since rural industries decayed and the village tradesmen disappeared.

After reading all that is here set down about this anonymous little territory, studying its nameless maps, its farm plans, statistical tables and photographs, I must confess that I seem to know even more about it than about my own native neighbourhood, and to be almost as deeply interested in all its many local problems. The pros and cons of the Village College (there *are* cons, it seems, though the pros have it), the sad state of the local plush industry " through the decline of Royalty," the obsolescence of powdered flunkeys, the philosophic defence of village quarrels " as themselves a form of social activity," and a hundred other matters that are all stitch in this rustic sampler.

But what is really warming is to find an ag cultural economist and the ex-estates-bursar an Oxford college taking amenity really seriou as of social significance and actually writi this : " It may not be too much to expect th the time is approaching when more people w consider that it is just as much a social offence erect an inharmonious building as one that is u hygienic or ill-equipped."

CLOUGH WILLIAMS ELLIS

NEW NOVELS

Odd Man Out. By F. L. GREEN. *Michael Josep 9s. 6d.*

Seven Times the Leading Man. By EGO HOSTOVSKY. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 9s.

A Fugue in Time. By RUMER GODDEN. *Micha Joseph.* 8s. 6d.

An Ape, a Dog, and a Serpent. By GERAL KERSH. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

Mr. F. L. Green's novels deal always wit contemporary violence, yet violence itself do not seem to be a sadistic obsession with him, a it does with some novelists. It is part of hi remarkable gift that peace, the longed-for opposit of violence, should always be implicit in his storie and indeed the number of actually violent scene in his books is small, though they disseminat their horror throughout his work. Mr. Green is realist, but he chooses at the same time to generalise his themes by partly isolating them fro the immediate facts of history. Thus, in a earlier novel of his, *A Song for the Angels*, th Germans are the enemy, but the country the attack is unidentifiable : it could be any country In that book, however, despite his achievement o many fine things (the dialogue between Hartrig and the peasant, for example, and the characte of Dunne, the " clown ") Mr. Green did no wholly manage to avoid the slight hollowness o allegory and a faint penumbra of unreality That problem of presentation he has solved i *Odd Man Out*, which strikes one, at a first reading as falling only a little short of being a masterpiece It has a poetic beauty of design, and a brilliant succession of dramatic scenes ; and there are a dozen fine pieces of character-drawing in it.

The book centres on a man called Johnny, the leader of a revolutionary organisation in Belfast ; during a raid on a linen-factory he kills a man in a struggle, and is himself badly wounded ; he is enabled to escape his pursuers for a time, and for eight hours he wanders dying through the storm and darkness of a November evening and night. The book is exactly divided into two halves ; part one is concerned with Johnny's companions, with the police, and with Agnes, the woman who is in love with Johnny ; they all set out to find him ; during the next few hours many of them are killed. The climax of this part of the book is Agnes's hinted decision that she will kill Johnny (since he must die in any case, either from his wounds or by execution) and thereby accompany him into eternity. Part two deals with Johnny's nightmarish adventures in the hours before his death. One hopes one does no harm to the excitement of Mr. Green's novel in indicating its outline ; its full implications cannot be briefly extricated or paraphrased. One may, however, be dubious at its closing lines. A dissident priest, to whom Agnes has confided her intentions, describes Agnes as having " redeemed " Johnny by killing him ; this will not convince everybody, and from the artistic point of view alone it comes as an unpersuasive *coup de théâtre*. Nevertheless, it scarcely robs the final pages of a moment of their beauty and terror, since the roaring music of the narrative carries one headlong.

The book's affinities with *Crime and Punishment* are obvious and justifiable ; curiously, it also echoes two Dostoievskian blemishes. In *Crime and Punishment*, when Sonya cries to Raskolnikov, " Oh, you are suffering more than yone in the world, " the fact which she utters is, it happens, believable ; it is even conceivable at she might utter just those words ; nevertheless is, indefinably, a difficult moment for the der. Mr. Green occasionally tests our credu- y in the same way, and exacts the same reluctant reement. Again, in *The Brothers Karamazov,* burden is placed on us when important traits character are described before the characters e properly alive ; Mr. Green has the same bit, and in his last novel, *On the Edge of the a,* a slighter book than *Odd Man Out,* it did t seem a disadvantage ; there even seemed a freshing boldness about it. It will not work ith more ambitious characters, however, and e heroine is extremely difficult to accept. A sser novel would not survive these flaws, but one thinks back over this book, one is amazed the richness of its successes, at the distance the thor has made us travel, the great concerted enes in which we seem to have participated, d the number of people, some of them appear- g for no more than a dozen pages, in whom we ve become absorbed. There have been few vels of comparable achievement since the pearance of *The Power and the Glory.*

Mr. Green's novel is the work of an author who s an enormous respect for the art-form he is sing. The other writers here have no such spect, and their novels appear as no more than rious aspects of crude self-indulgence. Not at they don't know what is what ; they know at it is rather sophisticated to play tricks with ronology nowadays, and this, distractingly d unrewardingly, they do. Mr. Hostovsky's ook is, throughout, hysterical ; one might pect to make allowances for this, since the trayal of Czechoslovakia is its subject ; but e aspect of the tragedy which preoccupies Mr. ostovsky—the behaviour of intellectuals who run away or betray or submit "—needs a treat- ent at once more sober and more subtle than r. Hostovsky provides. It may be mentioned at his resemblances to Kafka, which the ublishers have been at pains to point out, are ot easy to detect.

Miss Godden's new book is a variation on the ld theme of the family-saga, set permanently in large house in a London square. It covers a eriod from the early nineteenth century to the ppearance of Mr. Eliot's *East Coker,* and the uthor's method is to skim about through the ouse's memories as the fancy takes her. It ould be difficult to describe in moderate terms he book's abandoned sentimentality. And of Mr. Gerald Kersh's novel about the madness and eccentricity of the early film-producing world, it is enough to say, either as recommendation or warning, that it is low, coarse and vulgar.

HENRY REED

THE WISE MAGISTRATE

Why Crime? Some Causes and Remedies from the Psychological Standpoint. By CLAUD MULLINS. *Methuen.* 6*s.*

The most dangerous magistrate is the know-all, and next to him (or her) is the one who, boasting of ignorance, believes that all that is needed is a little common sense. Claud Mullins has made magisterial history because he knew he didn't know, and cared enough to learn. Incidentally, he can write. He says in his preface: "I was incompetent to deal with many of those whom I had to find guilty. I neither knew why they had committed their crime nor what action by me would best deter them from further criminal acts. So I sought the aid of medical men who had made a special study of abnormal behaviour."

So he started on a long trail, reading widely on modern psychology (witness the many authorities quoted in this book), making personal contacts with leading practitioners. Mr. Mullins wanted to understand the principles and technique of his medical confederates, recognising that it is more profitable to seek with open eyes than to play Blind Man's Buff with crime and punishment. Thus he earned the right to publish this forthright and constructive book on—his failures.

Although it is written avowedly from the psychological standpoint, it is largely concerned with problems of biology. (A biologist friend warns me that if Mr. Mullins is right in saying that psychologists tend to accept Lamarck on the inheritance of acquired characteristics, then the psychologists should brush up their biology.) In four chapters the author assembles the evidence on which he bases his opinion that the four major causes of crime are: unsound inheritance; unwanted births and wrong relationship between parents and child; breaking and broken homes; illegitimacy. Mr. Mullins looks beyond his own judgment as to the relative importance of the many factors which cause crime, and his book is primarily a plea for scientific research on the subject.

He recognises, too, that environment is powerful. "There is no gainsaying that the big improvement in the social services made during this century has been of enormous value," but "every advantage is achieved at a price. So far as our Courts are concerned, the price is seen in the existence of those who have no taste for independence or work. All plans for social security must be brought face to face with the problem." Is this the cloven hoof of reaction fleeting by? I think not; but perhaps the social services are less efficient than at times Mr. Mullins seems to suggest; perhaps the strings of work-shy, feckless young men and women passing through his Court loom over-large on his horizon.

Mr. Mullins refers to the Norwood East-Hubert Report on the possibility of treating certain young prisoners by psycho-therapy and the fact that "these eminent doctors found several of their cases to be hopeless." Eminent?—perhaps, but surely not eminent enough to preside over a Day of Judgment. At the International Penal Congress in 1930, Otto Kellerhals, speaking after a lifetime of successful reclamation of derelicts at Witzwil colony in Switzerland, followed "eminent" lawyers and psychologists who had spoken of "incorrigibles." He asked: "Who is incorrigible? I do not know. Many Witzwil men have been failures. But who failed—they or I?"

Mr. Mullins may be right in concluding from his case histories of "T. R." and "P. B." that the cause of their crimes lay in their genes. But until we know more about thousands of "T. R.s" and "P. B.s" and their ancestors, and until our mental health services and hospitals, our Remand Homes, Borstals and our slum prisons are improved beyond recognition, we can hardly justify anything worse than a gloomy agnosticism in our attitude to "incorrigibles."

All this to show how interesting and stimulating is "Why Crime?" With the plea for scientific research none but a fool would disagree. With the proposals for a Treatment Board to administer an indeterminate sentence, on lines similar to those advocated in Margery Fry's *Future Treatment of the Adult Offender,* many will agree, if the legal safeguards are adequate. Many others will welcome the proposals for a more moral and sensible divorce procedure, extending to it the conciliation methods of the Magistrates' Courts and shifting the interest from adultery to child welfare. On many aspects of the vital problem of founding families and homes fit for children to live in, this book contains practical suggestions and right-headed propaganda.

CICELY M. CRAVEN

POSTAGE on this issue is : Inland, 1½d. ; Foreign, 1d. ; Canada, 1d.

Company Meeting
DUNLOP RUBBER

INCREASED DEMAND EXPECTED

The forty-sixth ordinary general meeting of the Dunlop Rubber Company, Limited, was held on Friday, June 8, in London, Sir J. George Beharrell, D.S.O., chairman of the company, presiding.

The following is an extract from his statement circulated with the report and accounts:—

The turnover in the tyre division and in aeroplane equipment was substantially increased, but there was an increase in costs owing to the use of synthetic rubber and the continual necessity of employing inexperienced labour. In the general rubber goods division both volume and profit maintained the satisfactory levels of 1943, but the garment factory had a decrease in net profits through the reduction of the industry's labour quota.

The net profit for the year amounted to £2,615,700, compared with £2,765,797 for 1943. Included in the figure of £2,615,700 are abnormal items which result in a net credit of £74,114. Eliminating this net credit, the profit for 1944 is £2,541,586.

Owing to the great events of the last few months we have arrived at a point from which we can see the war receding, and conditions approaching which will not be entirely those of war or peace. This period will have its difficulties for industry. For a time, no doubt, supply will lag behind demand, but, given materials and labour, such a situation can be quickly corrected. We are satisfied that there will be a permanently increased demand for the company's products, quite irrespective of the first period of shortage. Our factories are being adapted to meet this demand.

The report was adopted.

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GROWING PAINS OF MODERN CHINA

The Story of China's Revolution. By O. M. GREEN. With 17 illustrations. *Hutchinson.* 18*s.*

China Looks Forward. By SUN FO. *Allen and Unwin.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

"The gift to China, in her terrible need, of such a leader as General Chiang Kai-shek was a direct act of Divine Providence"—this sentence from Mr. O. M. Green's preface is a key to his interpretation of the confused story of the Chinese revolution. Foreigners who lived in China through the worst years of the revolution (and it is not yet over) suffered inevitably, but Mr. Green, remembering the words of Lao Tzu: "when peace is made after great animosity there is always a surplus of animosity behind. Is not this wrong?" has given us an able record of difficult years and complex personalities without showing any "surplus of animosity" and with only sufficient prejudices to make his book virile.

He draws an unsympathetic portrait of Sun Yat-sen, "that curious, contradictory, domineering, inexplicable character," and echoes the verdict of contemporary foreign residents when he writes "Sun Yat-sen was a visionary with all the unpractical qualities which that word habitually suggests." It is worth comparing this opinion with Chiang Kai-shek's recent assertion: "events have proved time and again that Sun Yat-sen was not a visionary but one of the world's greatest realists."

Apart from minor inaccuracies in Mr. Green's survey of Sun's life (and who can write of Sun without error?) his references to the all-important Reorganisation Loan of 1913 are inadequate. Sun protested against this loan because it supported the "reactionary" Yüan Shih-kai, and the American Government of President Wil protested because "the conditions . . . tou very nearly the administrative independence China." Both documents are vital to an unde standing of the revolution and it is surpris they are not even quoted in this book. The o reference to the American intervention comes a footnote stating that President Wilson "di covered that loans to China were immoral This is misleading. The official document n only makes it clear that the objection is to th particular loan, "thus secured and administered but that Wilson's government was anxious " participate very generously" in the econom development of China.

Mr. Green's view of the part played by Russ in the reorganisation of the *Kuomintang* is un favourable. Sun, who for all his faults is " really powerful personality," falls "an easy pre to the astute Borodin." Nevertheless "whi Dr. Sun lived it was still possible to say that th *Kuomintang* had allowed the Communist Part to join them; after his death it was for a time question whether the Communist Party woul permit the *Kuomintang* to exist." But M Green suggests magnanimously that "withou Borodin's unique influence . . . there might sti be two Governments in China, one in Canto and one in Peking." Though he dislikes Com munists and says their violence in their earl years "both in doctrine and doings, was almos past belief," he quotes with enthusiasm favour able reports of present conditions in the Com munist areas and admits:

> A Party so well organised, so sagaciously tempere by experience to harmonise with Chinese instinct firmly supported by the peasants and well approve by intellectuals, should be able to make a stron bid for popular favour.

In short, Mr. Green did not like the flowerin of Communism, with its ugly red blossoms, bu the fruit looks delicious!

The *Kuomintang*, from being "a more or les loose federation of political interests kept togethe only by the force of Sun Yat-sen's personality," evolved into a government which did som remarkable work—the emancipation of women the establishment of a national dollar and "managed" currency, mass-education, improve transport and The New Life movement.

What of the future relationship betwee Kuomintang and Communists, now in uneasy alliance? Both accept Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People," but the Kuomintang (and their leader Chiang Kai-shek) accuse the Communists of breaking the first principle—national unity—by maintaining "a State within a State too powerful for control by the Central Government," while the Communists accuse the *Kuomintang* of a lukewarm attitude to the third principle—the livelihood of the people. "One thing seems perfectly clear," writes Mr. Green, "the future of China is for the progressives, a term which covers multitudes who are in no way to be called Communists." Of the "propertied class" he says:

> There are plenty left in China (where are there not?) who are by no means disposed to lose the ascendancy and privilege which wealth has secured for them. But public opinion will not tolerate the continuance of the abuses of power that money gave in the bad old days, and there is no enterprise on which the Chinese Government is more determined than that the standard of living throughout China must be raised.

This book is a guide through the maze of Chinese politics and, what is better, it expresses some original and interesting opinions.

Students of Chinese affairs will welcome the English edition of Dr. Sun Fo's *China Looks Forward*, a collection of speeches on the world situation in relation to China. This book was reviewed in these columns at the time of its American publication, but two new articles, *China Marching Toward Democracy* and *Writing China's Constitution*, have been written especially for the English version.

BERNARD MARTIN

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e Planned the Second Front. By Major John Dalgleish. *Gollancz.* 3s. 6d.

The author of this short book was closely associated ith the planning of invasion details from the early ys of 1942, until the last support troops disembarked the Mulberry ports. The general reader must t expect to find in this book revelations about grand rategy or about the repercussions of political events on the work of the planning staffs. Indeed, Major algleish indicates the limits within which he and his olleagues worked by the surprising statement: Russia entered the war on 22 June, 1941. This event . . made no appreciable difference to the plan. neither advanced nor retarded D-Day." However, o one with the smallest interest in military affairs n fail to be fascinated by the author's description the many problems faced by the planning staffs; aterproofing, run-flat tyres, the feeding problem, asickness, and a thousand other snags which demanded and obtained days and nights of untiring work om the British and American staffs. Probably the ost interesting part of the book is Major Dalgleish's ndid recital of the partial success of our effort to in strategical surprise, and of the game of double luff between the rival intelligences. The author's yle is fluent and engaging and his marshalling of cts competent. One may expect that historians ill be arguing in 2142, as politicians argued in 1942, at the Second Front could and should have been unched earlier than it was; that the Allies should ot have waited, in Maisky's phrase, until the last utton had been sewn on the last British soldier. ajor Dalgleish does not try, in his purely factual ook, to answer this question. But at all events he aves one in no doubt that the buttons were well ewn.

lizabeth Ham. By Herself. Introduced and edited by Eric Gillett. *Faber.* 8s. 6d.

Late in her life, Elizabeth Ham decided to write er autobiography. She "will endeavour," she says, "at the age of sixty-six, to recall the history of her ast life, and the influences which formed the present ndividual *me*." The period is 1783–1820. The uthor describes herself as "the child of respectable arents, respectably descended from that class of eomen who were in habits of intimacy with the eighbouring gentry and dined often at the Squire's." he book is a respectable example of feminine autobiography, the standards of which for some reason have ever been very high in this country. There is some ariety of scene—Dorset, Weymouth, Ireland; there s a due allowance of incident—at Weymouth visits rom George III and the Irish giant O'Brien (was he eally nine feet high?); a certain amount of comely ovemaking with officers of His Majesty's ships in Weymouth Bay; a decent love affair in Ireland with "Mr. J.," which came, like most incidents in her life, o nothing at all; and a general atmosphere of homeade cakes and large families and a demonstration of he continuity of English country life, contrasted with mall but startling reminders of period differences. We are reminded, for instance, that little girls who were en in 1793, were immersed in cold water once a day o cure weak eyes, were laced into their first corsets, aw rebels led through the streets to a public hanging in the country town, and took it as a matter of course that bear-baiting would be part of the amusements at the village fête. This is a charming family keepsake by a maiden aunt of the kind who "writes a good letter"; but is it quite worth publication? Mr. Gillett says that he has already cut out fifty thousand words of maudlin self-pity and inconsequential gossip. It would have been better if he had trebled the length of his own interesting introduction and halved the length of the text once again.

Week-end Competitions

No. 803

Set by Roger Marvell

Prizes of Six Guineas are offered for the best verses wishing happiness to Nicholas and Jonathan, twin brothers born on the eve of Victory. Not more than 16 lines. Entries by June 26.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 800

Set by Adrian Frere

In the new "forties" quest for frivolity, scent will come back into use. Prizes of six guineas are offered for a set of six new French names for scents, not necessarily of one word, with English equivalents. Marks for suitable names and wit in translation. Examples: *Frigidité*—"Marriage of true minds," or *Brutale*—"Unkindness."

Report by W. R.

The zest with which competitors flung themselves into this competition should gratify the setter (who is serving abroad), but the judge who has to act for him feels overwhelmed by it. One competitor informs me that a scent known in France as *Mon Péché* is in fact marketed here and in the U.S.A. as *Tweed*. ("After that," he adds, "any other attempts pale.") I recommend a first prize of two guineas to Prod and a guinea each to L. E. J., Joan Fitzgerald, J. Bruce, and Myrena. The runners-up were Little Billee, Ronald A. Wilson, Clifford Allen, and J. H. Jackson. I append a selection of happy hits.

Sourdine	Conscience.
Kremlin	Gremlin.
Frisco	Poles apart.
Coup de Foudre	Blitz or Prang.
Culot	Monty.
J'attendrai	You heard.
	PROD
Soupir de St. Antoine ..	Breath of Eden.
Oui, Monsieur	Good-humoured Lady.
Flagrant Délit	Fragrant Delight.
Folie Bergère	Milkmaid's Madness.
Moqueuse	Lady's Smock.
Lac Leman	Lover's Luck.
	L. E. J.
Demi-monde	Brave New World.
Le piège	Man-trap.
Puissance	Strength Through Joy.
Eventail	Fig-leaf.
Aux armes !	The Embrace.
Sirène	Beware !
	JOAN FITZGERALD
Nuit d'Extase	Grey Dawn.
Chanson de Rossignol ..	Berkeley Square.
Juillet	April Rain
Mais Non	Perhaps.
Femme du Monde ..	Worldly.
Pourquoi ?	Why not ?
	J. BRUCE
Jardin d'amour ..	Hyde Park.
Scandale	Conversation-Piece.
Souffle de Printemps ..	Spring Meeting.
Volupté	Tweed.
Ivresse	Blithe Spirit.
Candeur	First Kiss.
	MYRENA
Le dernier coup	Cup Final.
	LITTLE BILLEE
Folies d'amour	Love's Old Sweet Song.
Petite Amie	Junior Miss.
	RONALD A. WILSON
Crime Passionnel	Lovers' tiff.
Flagrant délit	Three's a crowd
La nuit exquise	Evening out.
	CLIFFORD ALLEN
Troublante	Troublesome.
Nue	Clouds.
	J. H. JACKSON
Ingénue	Parson's Pleasure.
	MRS. ENID CLEGG
Nudité	Frankness.
	GRANVILLE GARLEY
Volupté	Breakfast-in-bed.
	ALLAN M. LAING
Libertin	Freedom from want.
	COR
Pour Toi	For Mummy.
	DOREEN AGNEW
Consommation	Drink to me only.
	ROBERT UPCOTT
Esprit de l'escalier	Delayed Action.
	LESLIE JOHNSON
Je m'en fous	Informal.
	CONSTANCE SEWELL
Secrets intimes	Careless Talk.
	J. A. WURTZBERG
Déjeuner sur l'herbe ..	Fork Luncheon.
	"WILLY-GO-TO-BED"
Roseau pensant	Gone for a Girton.
	J. R. TILL
Jardins sous la pluie ..	English summer.
	F. LOCK and MRS. C. G. BUTTERWORTH
M'amie	Little pal.
	MRS. E. NEGUS
Cythère	Where Angels Whisper
	A. B. D.
Frisson d'Avril	Spring shower.
	E. C. W
Rêve de mon âme ..	The Double Blue.
	POODLE
Ma mie	Crumbs
	W. T. H.
Bon vivant	The Good Life.
	CURSER BELL
Extase	Good Companion.
	JOSEPHINE TERRY
Languissante	Such an invalid !
	ETHEL M. KENNEDY
Sacré Nom	Churchill.
	J. P. MCNUTTY

Personal

WOULD anyone look after 20 mths. boy during mother's confinement, July 1st–21st? £1 per week, food and accom. offered. Country and sea. Box 9322.

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Personal—continued

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Readers' Market

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WANTED: "Little Men," "Jo's Boys," "Little Women," "Good Wives"; Anglo-Saxon Texts; musical box; bookbinding guillotine; Causeuse or circular Ottoman (seat 3); artist's or architect's paper stretching apparatus; Sorbo sponge; Festing Jones' "Life of Samuel Butler."

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